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RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND THE JEW

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RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND THE JEW

A Sociological Inquiry into the
Nature and Origin of Literary Patterns

By
JOSHUA KUNITZ

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PREFACE

The study of the relation of literary fashions to economic, social, and psychological phenomena is a fascinating one. We can observe such a relation in the changing attitude of the Russian author to the peasant, and the American author toward the Negro[1]. It is, however, most strikingly illustrated in the attitude of the Russian writer toward the Jew. To disentangle and trace out the various forces that result in definite literary patterns, is a delicate matter. The characteristic pattern of each period must be viewed in its relation to economic background, social alignments, emotional survivals, and extraneous influences. Moreover, each accepted literary type must be examined as to its accuracy, as to whether the image is such because the object is such, or whether the mirror is crooked and unreliable.

In this study I have been primarily interested in the reflected image, i.e., in the Jew as seen by the Russian. Still, I could not repress a natural curiosity concerning the object itself and the idiosyncrasies of the reflecting surface. Has the Jew really been as represented? If not, what has caused the distortion? Has it been the fault of the mirror, of the atmosphere, or of both? Periodic transmutations of the image provoke further speculation as to what has actually been changing. For it is obvious that the image would be affected by a change in the thing reflected, by a modification in the mirror, by a shift in atmospheric conditions, by an interaction of any two or of all the three suggested contingencies.

To answer the above questions, I have made an attempt to study each Jewish type in Russian literature with constant reference to the actual Russian Jew in his economic

and social milieu, and as he has revealed himself in his life and art. But since my knowledge of this aspect of the subject is not wholly adequate, I have resorted to the labors of recognized scholars in the field, such as S. M. Dubnow, Y. Gessen, L. Wiener, M. Pines, etc. In my own field, I found the short essay by B. Gorev, *Russian Literature and the Jews,* and D. Zaslavsky's essay, *The Jews in Russian Literature,* exceedingly useful and suggestive. Lvov-Rogachevsky's study of the Jewish writer in Russian literature was also of great help to me.

In the course of this study, I had occasion to quote many passages from the works of Russian writers. Whenever available, I used existing English translations—Isabelle Hapgood's translation of Turgenev, Constance Garnett's of Dostoievsky and Chekhov, A. Yarmolinsky's of the *Shield* (not complete; in many cases I had to revert to the original), S. S. Koteliansky's of Chekhov's *Note Book,* Maurice Magnus's of Andreev's *To the Stars,* B. S. Guerney's of Kuprin's "Gambrinus," Poslovsky's of Kuprin's "The Jewess," P. Pinkerton's of Artsibashev's *Sanin,* Th. Seltzer's of Ropshin's *What Never Happened,* and anonymous translations of Gorky's *Fragments from My Diary,* and Chirikov's *The Chosen People.*

I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Clarence A. Manning for his kindness, encouragement, and valuable criticism; to Mr. Judah A. Joffe for the use of his books and his bibliographical suggestions; to Miss Rae Bunim for her comradely help and the many weary hours she spent over the manuscript. I cannot sufficiently express my indebtedness to Professor E. Neff for his detailed criticism, invaluable suggestions, and very sympathetic attitude.

JOSHUA KUNITZ.

January, 1929.

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PART I

From the Dawn of Russian History to the Sixties in the Nineteenth Century

PART I

FROM THE DAWN OF RUSSIAN HISTORY TO THE SIXTIES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Within the Ghetto: Ideals and Realities[2]

By the end of the Eleventh century the immigration of Bohemian and German Jews into Polish territory had assumed enormous proportions. This continued throughout the Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth centuries. The main causes of the steady infiltration of Jews into Eastern Europe were Jewish persecution brought about by the Crusades, and the wave of German colonization of Eastern Europe in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries. Together with the German colonists, a great number of Jewish merchants made their way into Poland.

Supplying a much needed commercial element, these immigrant groups were welcomed by the Polish State. We must bear in mind that by the end of the Twelfth century the economic and social structure of the Polish Kingdom began to take on a peculiar form. The entire population was divided into special groups, each having its own economic function, its own social and political privileges, its own legal status. This circumstance determined the entire subsequent development of the life of Polish Jewry. They, too, formed a distinct social unit, favored with definite privileges and confined within certain limits. Surrounded by numerous social units competing for influence and power, the Jews, as an alien group, were forced to rely on their compact internal organization, as well as on their ability to utilize at various times the cooperation of one or another of these many social groups.

Throughout the early centuries the Jewish population was under the direct protection of the Polish kings—its property rights were guaranteed, its religious freedom was assured, its economic activities were encouraged. To protect the Jews against the anti-Semitic agitation of the clergy and the opposition of the city magistrates who represented the growing native commercial elements, the King granted the Jews the privilege of having their own judges who would adjudicate cases in accordance with the Jewish Law, and their own administrative officers. Thus the peculiar Jewish form of organization, the "Kagal" (Jewish consistorium), came into being; it was, as we shall see, the natural outgrowth of economic and social alignments within the Polish Kingdom.

By the end of the Fifteenth century, however, the unstable equilibrium that had existed between the various strata of Polish society came to an end. The fatal ascendancy of the land-owning nobility and the higher clergy which was the cause of the weakening of the King's powers and of the ultimate disintegration of the Polish State—plus the growing antagonism of the city population toward the successful Jewish competitors, tended to make the position of the Jew more and more precarious. Ritual murder trials and pogroms were becoming quite frequent. In 1494, the first Polish-Jewish Ghetto came into being in Cracow, where all the Jews were ordered to settle outside the city limits, in a suburb especially designated for that purpose. In 1538 the growing opposition to the Jews expressed itself in the resuscitation by the Diet of a long-defunct law, the effect of which was to preserve the medieval Jewish costume. The Polish gentlemen were exasperated with the Jews who cast aside all the signs whereby they could be distinguished from the Christians and who adopted costumes similar to those worn by Christians. The Jews were

therefore ordered to wear a special kind of medieval apparel that would distinguish them from the rest of the population. In the course of centuries the gaberdine, the skull cap, the beard, and the side-locks became the traditional Ghetto guise no pious Jew would dare cast aside. The signs of dishonor became objects of pride, symbols of orthodoxy and loyalty.

The union of Poland and Lithuania (1569) under the same royal family did not arrest the disintegration of royal authority, nor did it check the rise of the land-owning nobility. The steady decline of the King's influence often impelled the Jews to turn for aid to the nobles. Furthermore, with the increasing number of Jews in Poland, "the streets in the royal cities where Jews lived became too crowded. The magistrates interfered with Jewish occupations of new districts, they were also opposed to the Jews settling in those parts of the city which belonged to the nobility, the churches, and the monasteries. . . . The result was that the surplus of the Jewish city population began to settle on the lands of private holders. The Jews began to play an important part in the village economy of the landowners; they also populated the newly-built cities on private estates."[3]

These changes in political and economic conditions resulted in new Jewish occupations and new Jewish types. Besides the Jewish merchant and craftsman, we now had the Jewish leaseholder of various items of the nobleman's estate. The items most commonly in Jewish hands were the production and sale of liquor, and the keeping of inns and taverns. Deprived of the powerful protection of the King, the Jew was forced into servility to the great nobles. Thus came into being the "luft-mensh," the man who made a living "out of the pure air," the man who darted about, undertook hundreds of tasks, sold anything, bought anything, and in the end remained a poor devil.

There was also the "mayofesnik," the toady, the lick-spittle, the fawning Jew, the Jew who was ready to dance, and sing, and writhe, and make a clown of himself before the landlord on whom his fate depended. Moreover, there was the ale-house and tavern keeper, whose profits would go to enrich the landlords, but who, in the eyes of the ignorant, besotted peasant, was responsible for the soil-tiller's unspeakable lot. It is important to note these types, for they were the Jews that came in closest contact with the non-Jewish population, and it was by them that the Christians judged the entire Jewish people.

It has been previously pointed out how the Jewish organization, the "Kagal," came to be formed. It has been indicated that the "Kagal" was the inevitable outcome of the division of Polish society into legally independent and economically distinct social units. It has been shown how external pressure tended to make the internal organization of Polish Jewry more compact. In the course of time, the "Kagal" became the instrument of Jewish self-government. It took care of Jewish education, keeping it within the bounds of tradition and orthodoxy. It attended to Jewish charities, to the administration of justice, and to other communal affairs. It was the sole agency through which the Polish Government collected the taxes from the Jewish community. Because of property qualifications, the leaders of the "Kagal" were generally elected from among the most opulent in the community. The rich "Kagal" leaders in league with the Rabbi were, generally speaking, the dictators of each Jewish community. They were the intermediaries between the Jewish masses and the outside world. For all the unspeakable abuse of power by the leaders, the rôle played by the "Kagal" in the preservation of the Jewish nationality cannot be overestimated. The "Kagal" organization seemed to strengthen and firmly cement the Chinese wall

of social, economic, and political restrictions built around the Jew in Poland.

In the main, the foregoing picture of Jewish life did not change after the partition of Poland in the last quarter of the Eighteenth century, i. e., after the bulk of Eastern Jewry came under the rule of Russia. During the last quarter of the Eighteenth and the first half of the Nineteenth centuries, the Jewish community was still organized in a "Kagal", the Jewish people were still clinging to forms of life, to traditions and customs, that were the outgrowth of conditions in medieval Poland. The reasons for this inertia will become evident as we consider the history of the Jew in Russia.

In Russia, up to the middle of the Nineteenth century, the Jew had very little opportunity of coming into close contact with the indigenous population. Though occasional references to such contacts are found in ancient Russian documents and annals, the references are few and far between, and they generally hark back to the Kievan, pre-Muscovite, period of Russian history, when stray Jewish merchants would find their way into the regions along the Dnieper. But as the center of Russian life shifted northward, the contact between the Russians and the Jews became less frequent, and with the rise of Moscow it became increasingly difficult for foreign merchants, and among them for Jewish merchants, to find access to Russia. The State of Muscovy had surrounded itself with an impenetrable wall. The Orthodox Church, patriarchal traditions, all ancient forms of life were vigilantly guarded against corrupting influences from the outside. Foreigners were regarded as spies. Roman Catholics and, later, Lutherans were detested as heretics. Merchants from other countries could come only as visitors; they were not allowed permanent abode within the boundaries of Russia.

Still, records reveal that even here, in Muscovy, the influence of the Jew was at times felt. We thus read of "the Jew Zkharia who enters Novgorod, converts certain prominent ecclesiastics (1493) and thus creates in Orthodoxy a frankly anti-Christian school."[4] But these cases were exceedingly rare, and it was only in 1563, at the time of the conquest of Polotsk, that the Russian Government was confronted for the first time with the fact of the existence of the Jewish nationality. The manner in which the Christian Tsar disposed of the few Jewish families that lived in that city is characteristic. When asked by his somewhat perplexed advisers what to do with these newly acquired subjects, Ivan the Terrible (1533-1584) answered unhesitatingly: "Baptize them, or drown them in the river." They were drowned. And the old Russian "zoological" nationalism was satisfied by this primitive solution of the problem.[5]

Generally, as far as the Jew was concerned, the "zoological nationalism" of the Russian Government persisted throughout the Seventeenth and the first three-quarters of the Eighteenth centuries. In 1727, for instance, Katherine I (1725-1727) ordered the expulsion of all the Jews from the Ukraine and from other parts of Russia, wherever they might be found. In 1742 Empress Elizabeth (1741-1761), notorious for her religious intolerance, also demanded the complete expulsion of Jews from the Ukraine (in Central Russia there apparently were no Jews), except those who would adopt the Greek Orthodox faith. Indeed, to the objection that Jewish merchants might be of benefit to the Empire, this noble lady curtly replied: "From the enemies of Christ I desire no lucre." So strong was the Russian's aversion for the Jew that even the "liberal" Katherine the Great (1762-1796), in her Manifesto of 1762, permitted entrance to Russia of all foreigners, "except the Zhids."[6]

But in 1773, 1793, and 1795, Russia wrested from Poland the vast and rich territory which was peopled with many millions of Jews and which was later included in the so-called "Pale of Settlement." It was not possible any longer to do away with this large population either by drowning it in a river, or by deporting it. In a quandary, the "enlightened" Empress simply decided to do nothing. "The Jews have lived there—let them stay there; they had certain rights relating to their faith and property—let them enjoy these rights in the future."

We thus see how it happened that the legal and economic status of the Jew did not change much with his entrance into the fold of the Russian State. We shall also see that the germs of the disabilities relating to free domicile, which later gave birth to the "Pale of Settlement," were really a Polish legacy. The existing Russian law merely offered a favorable soil for these germs to grow and develop. The fact that the Jews were predominantly city dwellers, organized in special "Kagals" which took care of revenue collections and of other Jewish affairs; together with the fact that the Russian Law forbade a townsman, be he Jew or non-Jew, to take up his residence in another town or village, seemed to work toward the ultimate establishment of the "Pale of Settlement."

Originally the law restricting a townsman's choice of residence was not a special limitation intended for the Jews, it was a medieval ruling affecting all the Russian subjects throughout the Empire. How, then, did it result in a special Jewish disability? Very simply: the afore-mentioned limitations were removed from the townspeople of non-Jewish birth, both in the newly annexed provinces and elsewhere, but they remained in full force with respect to the Jews living in towns. And since all the Jews, even those who lived in villages, or on private estates of great landowners, were registered as towns-

people, this restriction coincided with the limits of their nationality. Hence arose the Pale, which assumed the character of a national disability, and persisted well into modern times.

It was owing to this circumstance that the Jewish subjects of the Tsar were pressed together in medieval cities and towns on the outskirts of the Russian Empire. The vast majority of them lived in Lithuania, Poland, and the Ukraine. There were also a few Jewish settlements in the cities within the provinces of Courland and Livonia. Within these geographical confines the economic and political existence of the Jews was most precarious. Even within the Pale the Jew was not free to choose his place of residence—he was not only restricted to the town, but often to special districts in the town. Worse than outright persecution was the Government's vacillating policy toward the Jew. Densely ignorant of actual conditions, ever ready to respond to the pulling of all kinds of mysterious wires manipulated by elements envying, fearing, and hating the Jew, the Government, in its legal enactments, floundered hither and thither, from one extreme to another, thus managing to deprive the Jew of the slightest assurance of legal certainty and economic security. To illustrate:

"In 1795 the Jews who lived in the villages of the Province of Minsk were ordered to move to the towns. In the following year they were permitted to stay in the villages, because the landed proprietors employed them as agents for the sale of whiskey. In the year 1801 a new edict again expels the Jews from the villages. In 1802 the Senate rules that they must stay in their former places of residence. In 1804—the year that saw the first Regulation concerning the Jews—they are ordered to be expelled within three years from the villages throughout the country. But in 1808, before the term expires, the law

is found impracticable. The Jews again remained where they had been established, their status being subject to further regulation. Then the Committee of the year 1812 came to the conclusion that the law of 1804 must be completely abrogated, in view of its being unjust and dangerous. Between 1812 and 1827 the mood of the legislature is again altered and prohibitive measures follow one another. In 1835, these measures are once more found to be useless and inefficient. In 1852, expulsions are renewed, but a few years later, this policy is again abandoned. . . ."[7]

This vacillating legislative policy with regard to Jewish rights of domicile is suggestive of the treatment the Jews received at the hands of the Russian Government with regard to everything else. But this vacillation did not prevent the Government from pursuing a very consistent policy in the matter of taxation. In addition to the requisitions collected from the Jew by the local landlords, the Jew had a double tax imposed on him by the Government. Here, too, the tax was collected by the "Kagal," and much of the money collected would find its way into the spacious pockets of the "Kagal" leaders.

Legal and economic pressure from the outside, "Kagal" abuses on the inside, resulted in the complete degradation and impoverishment of the Jewish masses. The Governor of Lithuania, Frizel, reported that the Jewish women were taking care of the ale-houses, their husbands being forced to work outside in order to earn enough to live on.[8] Derzhavin, the poet, who was sent by the Government as a special investigator of Jewish affairs, though unsympathetic, felt duty-bound to report that the Jew in White Russia was living in extreme undernourishment and poverty.[9] The Governor of the Province of Kiev reported in 1802 that of the twenty thousand Jews in his Province two-thirds were not only unable to pay their

taxes, but found it "extremely difficult to earn enough for their daily sustenance."[10]

Later, under Nicholas I (1825-1855), one of the most harrowing pages of Jewish history was written in connection with forced military service. Speaking of military service as it affected the *Russian* masses, Professor Platonov says that it "became a heavy and hateful burden" and that "it ruined the poorer families by taking away their bread-winners for twenty-five years."[11] In the case of the *Jews* the situation was aggravated by the proselytizing and Russifying ambitions of the Government. Every effort was made to baptize and Russify the Jewish youths drafted into the army. With children the Government had very little trouble; with older boys the problem was more serious, as with them even coercion was often of no avail. Dubnow, the noted Jewish historian, relates the incident of a group of Jewish youths who chose death in preference to compulsory baptism. While the priest was performing the baptismal rites over them, they, instead of simply immersing their bodies, plunged into the river and drowned themselves.[12] The draft itself often took place under truly barbarous conditions. "The 'Kagal' leaders, guided chiefly by their own discretion and free will, would mark the young people to be drafted. Their names would not be revealed. In vain would the youths who feared the draft take refuge in the woods, or be hidden by their parents. The 'Khapers' [catchers] made regular raids, and, through cunning and threats, got hold of their victims."[13]

Yiddish folk-songs of the period express the bitter resentment of the poverty-stricken masses against the abominations of the draft and the inhumanity of the rich "Kagal" leaders:

> Tears flow through the streets,
> One can bathe in children's blood,
> There is groaning all around—

One waits and one waits for the dawn.
Children are snatched from the schools
And forced into soldiers' apparel
With the aid of the rich and "respected."
There, Rakover Zoosha's seven sons
All loiter about in the house,
While Leah, unfortunate widow,
Loses her only poor darling.
To press the cobbler into service,
The tailor, the "riffraff," is no sin...
But the scurvy "Khaitzigs," the aristocrats,
They, they must never be soldiers.[14]

The Jewish masses groaned under the yoke of poverty, prejudice, and legal disabilities. Throughout the entire period now before us life within the Ghetto, as well as the relation of the Ghetto to the world outside, bore all the earmarks of a fixed medievalism. And just as in Western Europe scholasticism was the emanation of conditions in the middle ages, so in the Ghetto a persisting medievalism produced a sterile scholasticism. Fetters without created fetters within. Forced into a cell, most Jews became so used to the narrowness, the murkiness, the cheerlessness of their surroundings, that they lost all taste for endless roads and wide horizons, for brilliant sunlight and verdant fields. Stifled by the poisoned air of an unventilated dungeon, they found a substitute for reality in interminable "pilpul" (casuistics) or mystical aberrations, in Talmudical subtleties, or Cabalistic vagaries.

Still, we must not exaggerate the gloom within the Ghetto. Suffering and persecution made the Jew cling all the more fervently to his religion and traditions. A spiritual flame was smouldering in the Pale. Wherever there were Jews, all kinds of benevolent and mutual aid associations were active: "Aid to the Poor," "Support of the Stumbling," "Visitors of the Sick," and similar societies—all of incalculable ethical and material value in the Jew's struggle for survival. Wherever Jews dwelt,

"kheders" and "yeshivas" (elementary schools and Talmudical academies) were to be found. "Torah" and "Avodah" (knowledge and the practice of the law) were regarded more highly than comfort and riches. True, the learning and the law, the dogmas and the practices, were hoary with age, yet they were perfectly adapted to the medieval conditions and the spiritual needs of the Ghetto.

The glorious Biblical past, the inspiring tales and legends of Jewish heroism, the proud consciousness of being the people chosen by God, the fervent hopes for "L'shanah Habah B'Yerusholaim," for the return to Jerusalem, the unshakable faith in the justice of the Omnipotent, Omniscient God—all these helped to sustain the Jew in his hours of trial.

On a Sabbath, or during the high-holidays, or during the beautiful holidays of Pesakh, Purim, Shabuoth, Succoth, Lag-B' Omer, and Khanukah, a gentle lyrical mood would descend upon the Ghetto. The mundane, the material, the ephemeral would vanish. The Ghetto in a mood of introspection would take on a serene, thoughtful, and blissful aspect. The "luft-mensh" and "mayofesnik," the tailor and the cobbler, the rabbi and the "melamed" (Hebrew teacher) would all feel that

Wos mir zeinen, zeinen mir
Ober Iden zeinen mir.
[What we are, we are
But Jews we surely are.]
Wos mir tooen, tooen mir,
Ober Toire lernen mir.
[What we do, we do
But the Torah we study.]

The respect for learning was so great that the Jewish mother, while rocking her infant boy in the cradle, would sing her wish that her son might be a student of the Torah:

Wos is die best skhoire?
Yankele wet lernen Toire....
[What is the best goods?
Yankele will study the Torah...]

There was not a Jew born in the Ghetto over whom his mother did not chant this lullaby. And a girl, while still in the cradle, was promised by her mother a bridegroom who would be a student of the Torah.

Indeed, the love for learning was so great that a Jewish woman deemed it her greatest joy, her most virtuous deed, to rush about and try to earn a living, peddling milk, or rolls, or cloth, in order to enable her husband to sit in the prayer-house and study the Talmud. From the point of view of numbers, it was this pale, stooped, dreamy, impractical Jew, remote from the hustle and bustle of the market place, the student supported by his wife, who was the most characteristic phenomenon of the Ghetto, rather than the obtrusive types more familiar to the Christian.

United though the Jews were in their misery, they had their own religious dissensions. For a long time the "misnagdim" and the "khasidim" were waging bitter war upon each other. The "misnagid" had his stronghold in Lithuania. He was the rationalizer, the pedant, the one who stuck to the letter of the law, the medieval scholiast. His passion was philosophical abstraction, argumentation, and tireless fathoming into the mysteries of ancient lore. The "khasid" reigned supreme among the less educated Polish and Ukranian Jews. He emphasized the spirit of the law, the element of faith and ecstasy in the worship of the Lord. There was a certain gay carefreeness about the typical "khasid." He would sell his "last pillow," and travel great distances to visit his beloved zadik, the "good man," the "miracle worker." There, in spiritual communion with other "khasidim," and to the

complete neglect of his family and his business, he would dance and sing and worship the Lord. The "misnagid" was aristocratic, the "khasid" democratic.

In their extremes, both movements lent themselves to abuse. The pedantry among the former was as deleterious as the fanatical admiration of the "rebbi" among the latter. The zadiks, who at the inception of the movement had been real "good men," of simple faith and great enthusiasm, gradually degenerated in many cases into autocratic, rich, hereditary potentates, lording it over their dominions, and gathering the last kopecks from their devout followers.

The abuses of the "Kagal," the medieval scholasticism, the "khasidical" fanaticism, aroused the opposition of a few of the free spirits who chafed within the Ghetto. Faint breezes from the West began to be felt. The Ghetto, though almost hermetically sealed against Russian influence, began to draw spiritual food from Germany, where at the end of the Eighteenth century, owing to the emancipatory tendencies and the influence of the philosopher Mendelsohn, the "Haskalah" (enlightenment) movement among the Jews had begun to make rapid strides. The early Germanophile "Maskilim" (followers of the Haskalah) within the Pale carried on a valiant struggle against the hatred and physical violence which they encountered from the orthodox faithful. They were convinced that European culture, European literature, European manners, if adopted by the Jews, would ultimately break down the wall of suspicion, calumny, and persecution. With what religious zeal would they memorize the German dictionary from cover to cover, with what danger to life and limb would they smuggle into the yeshiva or the prayer-house little forbidden volumes of Goethe, Schiller, and Heine! How many a "Maskil" would sit swaying over the "Gemora" (Talmud), dreaming of the

halcyon days when he would break the chains of the Ghetto, flee to freer worlds, fling away the long cloak, cut his side-locks, be a man among men, not a hated Pariah, a "scabby Jew." The strong, the energetic did flee, while the weaker, so many of them, were crushed by the hide-bound conservatism and medievalism of their environment.

Owing to these early Maskil pioneers, a new secular literature began to develop among the Jews. The chief literary medium was Hebrew, though attempts were also made to use Yiddish and even Russian. Toward the end of the period, however, the use of Yiddish and Russian for the purpose of literary expression became more and more frequent. A galaxy of Hebrew writers appeared on the horizon.[15] These wrote popular science, sociological and historical studies, as well as romantic novels, lyrical poetry, epic poetry, and dramas. They breathed a new life into the ancient Hebrew language. Horace and Virgil and many masterpieces of the modern poets, Schiller, Goethe, Mickiewicz, and others, were translated into it. In Yiddish, too, plays, sketches, and fables were written at this time by the two pioneers of Yiddish literature, Aksenfeld and Ettinger; though their work did not see the light until the early Sixties, i.e., until the beginning of the next period.[16] There were also the feeble beginnings of Jewish expression in Russian.[17] Here we already find the painful dualism which later became the cardinal characteristic of the psychology of the Russian-Jewish intellectual. In 1849 Mandelshtam, the first Jew to attempt Russian poetry, already feels this dichotomy. He loves his people, but he also loves Russia. On the one hand, the dear time-hallowed traditions of the Ghetto have their fascination; on the other, newer worlds and different forms keep beckoning to him. In crude and halting verse he complains of

his "emotions that are in eternal conflict, and tear and crush the heart." He is afflicted with doubts: should he "sail the perilous ocean himself, or should he perish with his brothers" in the Ghetto. Though he dreads the future, for he knows that "he is doomed to remain a stranger to the whole world," he is irresistibly, overpoweringly drawn to it....[18]

Thus, even within the prison walls of the medieval Ghetto, even amidst degradation, poverty, and hatred, the Jew sought to erect for himself a world of spiritual exaltation. He dared to dream dreams and build castles. He drew from the sacred well of the classics, and sipped the delicious nectar of the moderns, and, inspired, broke out into songs of his own.

Contempt

1. *Western Importations and Native Products.* Turning from the Jew as he lived within the Ghetto during the first half of the Nineteenth century to his reflection in Russian literature during the same period, one is now struck by the grotesqueness of the distorted image, now nonplussed by the lack of any correspondence between image and object.

The reasons for this failure of the Russian authors adequately to represent the Jew are many: medieval tradition, religious prejudice, literary patterns from Western Europe, the unconscious—and often conscious—resentment against an alien type and culture, class antagonisms and sympathies, and, above all, ignorance—ignorance on the part of so many of the Russian writers of everything pertaining to the Jew, his life and his inner world.

Buried in the Ghetto, the Jew kept his inner life to himself, rarely exhibiting it to his Christian neighbors.

And the Christian, even the liberal, knew little and cared less. True, the Russian writers of Ukrainian and Polish origin (Bulgarin, Gogol, Dahl) had some knowledge of of the Jew, slight and meagre as it was; the Great Russians, however, had no knowledge at all. They had up to the Sixties virtually no contact with Jewish life. These Great Russian writers, moreover, had too many of their own problems that demanded immediate solution. They were too busy finding themselves, too much concerned with Russian life in its various manifestations. Autocracy and serfdom were weighing torturingly on their conscience. The Jew was so remote, so sequestered, so peculiar... Is it any wonder that when they did depict a contemporary Jew, they were limited to types they were most apt to meet: the "luft-mensh," the "mayofesnik," the tavern keeper?

Furthermore, the prevalence in the whole of Russia, the Ghetto included, of obsolete social and economic forms and traditional attitudes, was bound to color the Russian's conception of the Jew. The Russian author of the period was a landed proprietor, a serf-owner, and a nobleman. As such, he would naturally reflect the bias of his class. A leisured aristocrat, he was prone to despise anything associated with the din, the bustle, the vulgarity of the market place. Small wonder that he had nothing but contempt and derision for the huckster, the peddler, the Jew. Indeed, the absurd side-locks and skullcap, the flapping coat and wild gesticulation, the fantastic pronunciation and alien inflections were sufficiently ludicrous to stir the risibility even of the Russian writers, a species not particularly addicted to laughter.

Yet, this contemptuous attitude was not all-pervasive. In many cases it was modified and counteracted by powerful extraneous influences, chiefly European. Russian writers had, since the beginning of the Eighteenth cen-

tury, been in constant apprenticeship to Western masters. European literary movements, fashions, fads, and images were invariably echoed by a host of Russian imitators and emulators. Since the Russian writer had practically no idea of the living Jew, he was most likely to be impressed by the Biblical images in Milton, by the medieval portraits in Marlowe, and Shakespeare, and Scott, by the romantic lyrics in Byron, or by the philosopher Jew in Lessing. Traces of these Western literary prototypes and attitudes are found in Russian writing of this time. Here we find Barabases, and Shylocks, Nathans and Isaacs of York; here are Jessicas and Abigails and Rebeccas. Here, too, the eternal father-daughter theme is repeated *ad nauseum*. And the fathers are regulation fathers—inhuman fiends, Judases, magicians, usurers, murderers, poisoners, spies. And the daughters are regulation daughters—invariably beautiful, gentle, and, of course, in love with Christians.

Another, though weaker, influence was, naturally, Russia's own literary and theatrical traditions. The apocryphal literature that had been brought into Russia from Byzantium and the Southern Slav countries during the early centuries and which had been the only spiritual fare of the Russians for hundreds of years, contained many virulent and damnatory references to the Jew. Take, for instance, the beautifully humane and immensely popular legend, "The Holy Virgin's Descent into Hell."[19] The Virgin is shown to be imploring God to have mercy on the sinners, including those "who have eaten human flesh." God refuses the Virgin's request—"How can I have mercy upon them? I see the nails in my Son's hands." The Virgin remonstrates, "Master! I do not pray for the infidel Jew, but for the Christians I ask thy forgiveness." The blessing of God's mercy is bestowed upon those "who have eaten human flesh," but not upon the

"infidel Jew." A similar tradition persisted in the theater. During the precarious existence of the Russian theater in the Seventeenth century and up to the beginning of the Nineteenth, crude religious plays on Old and New Testament themes were often acted. Jewish characters from the Old Testament were naturally treated with dignity, but the Jews who had played a part in the tragic death of Jesus were generally represented as physical and moral monstrosities. To what extent these early traditions affected the authors of the period under consideration, it is difficult to establish. However slight, they were, no doubt, factors in the final crystallization of the attitudes of this time.[20]

We must note, however, that not all the Jews in Russian literature were Biblical or Western echoes. Authors like Gogol, Dahl, Bulgarin, and Dostoievsky did write of the contemporary Jew. These men either came from regions where Jews were numerous, or had occasion to observe them at close range. Their Jewish characters are more realistic in externals. Caricatures and burlesques, they are not at any rate romantic cut-throats, nor fiendish alchemists; their women are not always beautiful, nor do they always carry on amatory intrigues with Russian cavaliers. Though absurd, their Jews are not anachronistic. Still, the real and ideal life of the Jewish people, as manifested in the institutions and traditions, in the literature and the folksongs of the Ghetto, remained absolutely unknown to all the Russian authors, regardless of the literary genre they employed. This we will now illustrate by a more careful study of a few representative writers of the period.

2. *A. S. Pushkin* (1799-1837). At the Pushkin celebration in 1880, Dostoievsky, in a famous speech, acclaimed that great national poet as the very epitome of the Russian soul. What made Pushkin so peculiarly Russian

was, according to Dostoievsky, his universality, his ability sympathetically to fix in poetic images any age or epoch, any clime or environment. Pushkin was indeed richly endowed in this respect. His "Stone Guest," "Mozart and Salieri," "The Feast During the Plague," "Boris Godunov," etc., are ample proof of this.

The Jew, however, was not included in this comprehensive, all-pervading sympathy of the great poet. On the contrary, whenever Pushkin approached a Jewish subject he revealed a dire lack of originality. Here his atitude was traditional, his impressions superficial. Trite, long-abused images, hackneyed characterizations, all borrowed from Western authors—this, and nothing more.

Pushkin's early poem, "The Black Shawl" (1820), offers a very interesting commentary on his attitude toward the Jew. In this poem the hero tells of his passion for a beautiful Greek girl of whom he is reminded by a black, blood-stained shawl. Once, while the hero was revelling with his boon companions, there appeared before him a "despicable Jew."

> With thee here are feasting (the Jew hissed) thy friends,
> While there the Greek maiden thine honor offends.

The hero "gave him some shekels, and cursed the old Jew," then rushed forth to slay the girl and her lover.

This poem is an adaptation of a Moldavian song still popular in Rumania.[21] In the original we see a devoted friend informing the hero of the girl's faithlessness. Pushkin, however, dropped the devoted friend and injected a "despicable Jew" instead. Obviously, he felt that friendship would not be a psychologically sound motive for an act so dastardly as tale-bearing. He supplied another incentive: Gold. And since in the mind of our poet greed for gold was associated with the Jew (an inevitable association, considering the hoariness of this

tradition), he naturally chose a "despicable Jew" for the performance. The Jew got what he wanted—money; he also got what he deserved—curses.

Jewish greed, cowardice, and villainy are brought out in much stronger relief in Pushkin's romantic poem, "The Avaricious Knight." Here the colossal, overwhelming avarice of the Christian Knight is described in such powerful, sonorous, richly-imaginative lines, psychologically so subtly, so truthfully explained, that even the Knight's lies and absurdities serve only to accentuate the grandeur of his passion. The Knight is a monumental figure. In his passion there is the dignity, the sublimity of great tragedy. In juxtaposition to this, how petty, how craven is Solomon's greed. "He groans and cringes, he cringes and groans." He at first denies having money in his possession. But when Albert, the Knight's impecunious son, threatens to administer a beating, the Jew forthwith changes his mind and, to save his precious gold, suggests to Albert, insinuatingly, circumambiently, that the latter poison his rich but miserly father. He even offers to provide the poison. Albert is duly indignant:

> What! Poison my father! And thou didst dare...to a son...
> Ivan, seize him, hold him! And thou didst dare...to me...!
> But knowest thou, thou craven Jewish soul
> Thou cur, thou snake, that I will forthwith hang
> Thee on yon gate?...

His money spurned, the Jew is driven away. As an afterthought, Albert changes his mind. He sends his servant to get the money, but he is careful to order that Solomon be not admitted to his presence, for there is the "smell of Judas" about the Jew.

Here we may be warned against the common fallacy of imputing to the author the sentiments expressed by one

of his characters. It is Albert, we may be told, and not Pushkin who feels the "smell of Judas" about the Jew. Pushkin, it may be urged, is writing in the romantic vein. Neither the Knight, nor the Jew, is drawn from the objective realities the poet was likely to have encountered. Both are models taken from Western authors. Both are importations from medieval Europe. Thus, if Plato is right, and art, being a reflection of a reflection, is *two* removes away from reality, then Solomon in the "Avaricious Knight," being a reflection of a reflection of a reflection, is *three* removes away from reality, and certainly cannot serve as an indication of Pushkin's real sentiments.

Still, even this reflection of a reflection of a reflection is significant. For, after all, the poet is not a passive mirror. He is selective, and his selection depends on his predisposition. The injection both of the "despicable Jew" into the "Black Shawl," and of the Jew who had the "smell of Judas" into the "Avaricious Knight," tends to show that Pushkin was inclined to dwell on the Jew's negative traits; that he, in fact, was possessed of a definitely anti-Jewish prejudice; and that, like his hero Albert, he felt that there was the "smell of Judas" about the Jew. Indeed, our contention is amply substantiated by Pushkin's description of his meeting (1827) with his old Lyceum friend Küchelbeker, a Russian aristocrat and, of course, not a Jew.

"A tall, pale, and lean young man," he writes, "with a black beard, and dressed in a frieze cloak, and in appearance a real Jew—in fact, I had taken him for a Jew —and the inseparable ideas of Jew and spy created in me the usual reaction: I turned my back on him."[22]

Clearly, our poet's piling up of epithets such as "cur" and "snake" and "Judas" was not merely an attempt at artistic verisimilitude, at providing historical atmosphere

and color. It was the expression of Pushkin's actual feelings, standard, unoriginal as these feelings were. Forsooth, anything even suggestive of a Jew was enough to make him turn his back on it!

Anything? Well...not anything. We should rather say anything suggestive of the male Jew. For our debonair poet evinces much greater gallantry and magnanimity in his treatment of the Jewess. There is something exotic and piquant about the Jewess. Her Oriental type seems to promise unspeakable pleasures. The poet refuses to regard her too seriously; she disposes him to flippant and even lewd playfulness. In his youthful little jingle "Christ Is Risen, O My Revekka," this playfulness is cheap and vulgar. In his notoriously profane and sacrilegious, though brilliant, poem "Gavriliada," there is an equally frivolous allusion to the Jewish woman.

In view of the extreme sanctity of the orthodox Jewish home, and the austere morals and strict conservatism of the average Jewish woman of that period, this sort of treatment may be regarded as a curious psychological aberration. A modern Freudian would probaly analyze it as the wish fulfilment of the poet's suppressed desire. But the Freudian might be wrong at that. For in this matter also Pushkin's attitude was thoroughly traditional, he simply followed models supplied by the West. With regard to these Western models, M. J. Landa, in his exhaustive study of the Jew in the drama of Western Europe, complains that "usually, whilst the Jew is repulsive and mostly aged, the Jewess is young and beautiful, virtuous and charming, and invariably beloved by a Gentile."[23] Mr. Landa's remark would apply almost in toto to the Russian writers of the period we are now considering. The only word that need be changed is "virtuous," "voluptuous" would more correctly describe the Russian writer's conception of the Jewess.

We thus see that as regards the Jewish subject Russia's greatest poet and literary path-finder was content to follow the beaten track. Here we have the inevitable money lender, the usual pretty Jewess, and the regulation adjectives and epithets. The poet's treatment of the Jew sinks to absurdity in the poem "The Hussar," where, in a humorous vein, he insists on marrying an exceedingly comical Jew to a—frog.

But in addition to the beaten track noted above, there was another path an enterprising poet could follow. There was the time-honored Biblical tradition. Hebrew characters from the Old Testament have everywhere been treated with due respect. In English literature, for example, there were medieval Shylocks and Barabases, to be sure, but there was also Milton's Samson Agonistes. Moreover, in the Nineteenth century, we have Byron, the arbiter of continental literary fashion, writing the very sympathetic Hebrew Melodies.

Pushkin knew English literature. We know that he was influenced by Shakespeare (Boris Godunov), and that he imitated Byron (The Prisoner of the Caucasus, Eugene Onegin, etc.). Unquestionably he knew Milton. It would indeed be strange, considering his deep admiration of English writers, were we not to find in his works traces of their sympathetic atitude toward the ancient Jew. We can understand how the theme of a small and heroic people such as Israel in the times of Holofernes, a people, suffering, patient, yet strong in its trust in God, clinging to its traditions and refusing to be annihilated, would appeal to the romantic, Byronic side of Pushkin's nature. In the poem entitled "Judith," Pushkin apparently attempted to elaborate such a theme:

> When the Assyrian Lord
> Was inflicting punishment upon the people,
> And Holofernes had subjugated
> All of the Asiatic region,

Aloof in its patient humility;
Strong in its faith in God's omnipotence,
Israel bent not its neck
Before the proud Satrap.

The poem was never finished. The poet's inspiration spent itself in eight feeble lines. In another poem called "The Beginning of a Narrative," we have only the setting: A Jewish cottage, a dim lamp, a patriarchal Jew poring over the Old Testament, a Jewess weeping over an empty cradle, a young Jew in the corner buried in thought—a beginning, a fragment; and it leaves one free to speculate what was the plot the great poet had in mind, and why this plot never reached fruition.

The answer to these questions seems to be that Pushkin simply could not do justice to the theme. Of the two atitudes, the contemptuous one seemed to be nearer to Pushkin's heart. His snubbing of the Jew-like Küchelbeker is incontrovertible proof. The ideas of Jew and spy were to Pushkin inseparable. The Jew was a Judas, a spy, a cur; he was greedy and ridiculous and despicable. Such feelings were deeply ingrained in Pushkin's heart —they certainly were more in accord with the tradition of his own Christian Russia, they were more in harmony with his aristocratic view of life, they applied more aptly to the strange, secretive, clannish Jew whom the poet had probably had occasion superficially to observe during his wanderings in Bessarabia. The heroic Jew was to Pushkin an alien idea, the good Jew a mere literary motif. Neither was attended by appreciable emotion. That is why Pushkin was unable to embody them in real poetic images. For, after all, we repeat, the artist is a peculiar mirror. Consciously or unconsciously, he is selective; and what he selects, and how happily he reflects, depends largely on his congenital bent, his class bias, his religious and race prejudices.

3. *M. Y. Lermontov* (1814-1841). Ignorance of the Jew and his world, a slavish adoption of Western Jewish moulds, a readiness to follow two opposite leads supplied by foreign tradition—all these elements found in Pushkin's poetry are perceptible also in the literary and dramatic works of his younger contemporary. Children of the same age, members of the same aristocratic social class, products of similar educational and literary influences, Pushkin and Lermontov were bound, in all aspects of their art, to reveal similar attitudes and tendencies. With regard to the Jew these similarities are particularly striking. In Lermontov, as in Pushkin, we find the same much used models of the covetous Jew ("The Criminal"), the spying Jew ("Sashka"), and the pretty, frivolous young Jewess in love with a Christian ("Sashka," "Whither So Swiftly, Thou Pretty Young Jewess," "Spaniards"). Here, too, the epithets "cur," "Judas," "dog" appear in profusion. Moreover, here, again, alongside of the usual contempt, there is felt a note of sympathy, but somewhat more pronounced than in Pushkin. In fact, it is this persistently recurring note of sympathy that distinguishes Lermontov's treatment of the Jew from that of Pushkin. And if the common elements can be explained by identity of environmental factors, the divergence can be accounted for by differences in these writers' temperaments. For unlike the rather easy-going Pushkin, Lermontov was a romantic, proud, demoniacal, uncompromising rebel—a "heavenly cloud through eternity wandering,"[24] a "white sail"[25] tossed by the seething billows. To such a nature a hero at odds with society, a wanderer, an outlaw, a criminal, was almost an artistic necessity.

Accordingly, at the age of fifteen (1829), Lermontov, unacquainted with the contemporary Ghetto Jew, wrote the poem "The Criminal," in which two outlaw Jews are the heroes. This poem, naive and unreal, is important as

an early indication of Lermontov's turn of mind. Instead of taking the more hackneyed, and, to the Russian, more acceptable, Gipsies or Circassians as the heroes chafing at society and its laws, Lermontov selected two Jews. One of them is "a fanatic of the ancient law," the other, a rebel against society who is "seeking happiness in the world." Though these Jews, tempted by gold, turn out to be Judases, still, their delineation is imposing enough to suggest that Lermontov's conception of the Jew was from the very beginning less colored by the traditional contempt. These Jews, for all their greed and treachery, do not lack dignity, they are strong, brave, romantic, adventurous cut-throats. Similarly, we may note here, the Jew who slays his daughter and her Christian lover, in the poem "Whither So Swiftly, Thou Pretty Young Jewess" (1832) is also very imposing; he is a powerful, ruthless fanatic, wielding a dagger.

At the age of sixteen, Lermontov wrote his first five-act play, the "Spaniards." The play, as is to be expected, is highly artificial, the dialogue bombastic, the characterization childish. For a boy of sixteen, however, it was a remarkable achievement. In this play all the noble characters are Jews, or of Jewish blood. The Christians are cruel, haughty, licentious, and treacherous. The family life of the Jew is harmonious, beautiful, of idyllic, Biblical simplicity. As between the persecuted and the persecutors, Lermontov was wholeheartedly on the side of the former. Here are some words, crude in sentiment and expression, the boy Lermontov put into Naomi's mouth:

> One might think that the Jews weren't human beings!
> Our race is more ancient than the Spanish—and their
> Prophet was born in Jerusalem.
> Ridiculous! They want us to
> Accept their faith—for what?
> That we, like them, might hurl each other to perdition?
> They extol humility so much,

The love for one's neighbor, mercy,
They say this is their law;
But this we fail to see.

Lermontov, like Pushkin, was obviously ignorant of the Ghetto Jew. His sympathy for the idealized, romantic Hebrew is traceable, no doubt, to foreign influences. The fact that he translated several of Byron's Hebrew Melodies and that he wrote three Hebrew melodies of his own, suggests one possible source of Lermontov's inspiration. The "Spaniards" shows indubitable signs of Lessing's influence. It seems that the beautifully humane spirit that animates "Nathan the Wise" had a great deal to do with strengthening Lermontov's sympathy for the Jew. On the other hand, when Lermontov makes Moses ("Spaniards") deplore the loss of his daughter, his son, his wealth, and his shekels all in one breath, he reminds us of Shylock's "My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!" and of Barabas's "O girl! O gold! O beauty! O my bliss!" Surely this is no mere coincidence.

4. *N. V. Kukolnik* (1812-1868). In the Russian's treatment of the Jewish subject, we have so far perceived echoes of Western authors. In Kukolnik's two dramas, "The Statue of Christoph in Riga" and "Prince Daniel Vasilievich Kholmsky," these echoes grow more distinct. In reading his dramas, one is constantly aware that, though the hand that penned them was the crude, ungainly hand of the second-rate dramatist Kukolnik, the inspiration was that of Shakespeare or of Marlowe.

The Jewish characters in the two plays are Zkharia—an authentically historical figure, the originator of the heresy of the "Judaizers"—and his daughter Rachel. Zkharia is a composite miniature image of Barabas and Shylock; Rachel—of Abigail and Jessica. The time-worn old-father-young-daughter combination is in plain sight. The inevitable "dog," "cur," "Judas," "leech," etc., are

flung with great gusto. Kukolnik was no bold explorer. He held to accepted formulas. Indeed, even in those parts where through the heavy clouds of verbiage one does discern a spark of genuine emotion, one is always vaguely conscious of reading a wretched paraphrase of a familiar passage from one of the English masters.

Thus, when one of the Knights demands that Zkharia provide him with false witnesses, Zkharia lugubriously holds forth: "Oh, how many times will you take from us this terrible tribute for the right of hiding in a dark corner in Riga!...Calumny pursues the Jews and they heed the slander. Whether guilty, or not, it is all the same—the accusation is not removed. What's to be done? The Jews follow the path suggested by the calumny... We are poor, yet riches are demanded from us—we therefor resort to thievery. We are honest, yet we are not believed—we therefore use deception. Only then are we left alone, only then may we live more at ease. We are good, yet we are persecuted...But man is mere flesh... pain overpowers us, and, incensed by the injustice, we turn into snakes, poisonous, revengeful...We are truthful...but we must buy life at the price of perjury!..."

Like Shylock, only less eloquently, less convincingly, Zkharia turns tables and holds the Christians responsible for the very faults in the Jew for which the Christian scorns him. "But man is mere flesh... pain overpowers us, and, incensed by the injustice, we turn into snakes, poisonous, revengeful" (Zkharia) "...If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" (Shylock).

But Zkharia is not a mere reproduction of Shylock. On the whole, the latter is moved not so much by the wrongs done to his race, as by a personal feeling of resentment. Not so Zkharia. He purports to speak for his

people. He is inspired with a great vision—a renaissance in Jewish life. The ancient prophecy shall come true, the star of Israel shall again rise to shed its glory over the universe. He, Zkharia, will bring this thing to pass.

How shocked he is when he learns that his daughter Rachel is in love with the Russian Prince Kholmsky. His towering hatred for the Gentiles knows no bounds. He admonishes his daughter to bring to her lover "poison, secret sin, temptation, evil charms . . . ." He urges her to push her lover into "a chasm, and gloat over and cheer the ruin of the foe," and then he proceeds:

Our fathers' blood still, still for vengeance cries. . . .
My only one, I'm nearing to the grave!
Where are the acts, where are the noble deeds
Which should insure, according to our rabbis,
Eternal life up in the higher realms?
Love! Love! Ah, not for us, my child, to love,
Not for us, a tribe of weeping sufferers.
Disgrace and shame have bound our hearts with chains,
And for our bodies cruel fires burn.
Fettered and hushed our prayers to our Lord!. . .
Thou mayest love them dead, but not alive.
Their hateful lips will never touch thy mouth—
I swear by God, the Torah, and Mt. Sinai.
The flames await us. Rather to yon flames
I bring thee as a sacrifice with me,
In virginal and holy purity. . . .

Zkharia, we see, would rather sacrifice the life of his beloved daughter than have her love a Christian. In this touch of characterization, Kukolnik is truer to the nature of the Jew than either Turgenev, who had the Jew ready to sacrifice his daughter's purity to save himself ("The Jew," see p. 49), or Lazhechnikov, whose Jew voluntarily gave his daughter into Christian hands ("The Daughter of a Jew," see p. 33). The cases of Turgenev's and Lazhechnikov's Jews might have been unique episodes, the case of Zkharia was typical and true of the overwhelming majority of Jews.

But, even in this bit of impeccable characterization, Kukolnik was not original. Marlowe, Shakespeare, Scott, and others handled similar situations in precisely the same manner. The last three lines of the above quotation bear a striking resemblance to the words of Barabas: "I mean my daughter! but, ere he [The Christian] shall have her, I'll sacrifice her on a pile of wood." Both fathers would *sacrifice their daughters in flames rather than have them marry Christians.* The likeness is unmistakable and appears to be more than fortuitous. Another striking parallelism between Zkharia and Barabas is in their admonitions to their respective daughters. The Jew of Malta assures his daughter that "It's no sin to deceive a Christian," and Zkharia urges Rachel to deceive her lover, to bring to him "poison, secret sin, temptation, evil charms...." The analogy can be carried still further, for both, Zkharia and Barabas, are magicians, poisoners, and necromancers.

5. *I. I. Lazhechnikov* (1792-1869). Unlike the three foregoing authors, all members of aristocratic families, Lazhechnikov was a member of a well-to-do merchant family. Early in his career he evinced a liberal turn of mind. In his "Campaign Notes of A Russian Officer" (1820) he lauds the solicitude of the Prussian Government for the people's welfare and education. In the same work he expresses his strong disapproval of serfdom. This humane attitude Lazhechnikov also maintained with regard to the Jew. Thus, contrary to the tradition which reigned in Russian literature concerning the Jew, Lazhechnikov, in the historical romance *Basurman* (*Infidel,* written in 1839), pays a glowing tribute to Jewish achievements in the arts and sciences of the middle ages. In the same novel, the author, speaking of the persecution of Jews in those ages, scornfully remarks:

"How were the Jews looked upon in the 15th century,

when the inquisition had been instituted and was roasting Jews and Moors by the thousands...? The powers persecuted the Jews with fire, sword, and maledictions; the people, enraged against the Jews by rumors that the latter seized Christian children and drank their blood on Passover, wreaked their vengeance upon them, and for one imaginary crime retaliated with a hundred actual ones.... In our time, and this very recently and in enlightened countries [obviously Lazhechnikov did not include Russia in his statement] the Jews have begun to be looked upon as human beings, and are being granted a definite status in society."

The Jewish character in this novel is again Zkharia, the originator of the heresy of the "Judaizers." Zkharia is not very clearly drawn. He is a preposterously romantic figure, ubiquitous, clever, ambitious, and, judging by the standards of the time, learned. In his accomplishments he is something of a Barabas. He has "an extraordinary mind, an alluring eloquence, a mastery of chemistry, and a rare love for occult science." But here the resemblance ends. For Zkharia's most telling traits are gratefulness, considerateness, and self-sacrificing devotion to the man who had once done him a good turn. Anton, the hero of the novel, a Bohemian gentleman, who, under very melodramatic circumstances, had been adopted and trained by an Italian doctor, had once saved the Jew from the hands of some street urchins. The Jew never forgot it. Throughout the novel he plays the part of Anton's anonymous guardian angel. And when Anton is plotted against by the courtiers of Ivan IV, the omnipresent Jew learns of it and, despite considerable danger to himself, saves him.

Here we read of the "noble" Jew, the "good" Jew, the "honest" Jew—adjectives hardly associated with the Jew in the writings of that period. We even see the scan-

dalizing scene of Jew and Christian embracing. We even read that the Jews can blush:

" 'Now that we have explained to each other everything we had to know,' said Zkharia blushing, 'permit, at parting... me... a Jew... nobody will see... I'll blow out the candle... permit me to embrace you and press you to my bosom for the first and last time.' The young man did not let Zkharia extinguish the light; they embraced in full light... with a feeling of love and sincere gratitude.' "

In "The Daughter of a Jew," Lazhechnikov's uninspired sermon in five acts, an attempt is made to study the contemporary relations between the Jew and the Christian. The drama is constructed on the old father-daughter-Gentile-lover pattern. The author, however, infuses into it a cloyingly liberal content. He deplores the prejudices against and contempt for the Jew. As in Lermontov's "Spaniards", the villains here are not the Jews. The message is that Jews have no reason to be ashamed of their origin, especially if they have become Christians. This feeling of false shame is the tragedy of Natalia Ivanovna Gorislavskaia, a beautiful and noble Jewish girl who had been adopted by Vitalina, a rich Russian lady. Natalia's blood would congeal at the mere thought of revealing her disgraceful origin to the man she loved.

"What," she exclaimed, "that he should discover that I am the daughter of a Zhid? No, I will never agree to this experiment. I would rather part with my happiness, I would rather die."

Solomon, Natalia's father, was a poor Jew from Russian Poland. Though he gave his daughter away to Vitalina for money (a very improbable situation!) the author tries to make us feel that he was really a good Jew, not greedy at all, but that cruel poverty and the concern for his daughter's future were responsible for his apparent lack of parental affection. Still, to really establish Sol-

omon as a good man, in the eyes of the Christian audience, Lazhechnikov makes him declare: "I have long thought of it, I made ready, and now I am determined to be a Christian like you . . ." And Natalia replies with fervor: "Oh, if it were only so! The Lord sustain you in this great deed!"

Artistically, the play is worthless. There is not one living character, not one convincing utterance. The plot, as well as the dramatic situations, is forced and far-fetched. The Jew and his daughter in their virtue and sentimentality are (if possible) even less alive than the Christians in their conceit and villainy.

Their glaring faults notwithstanding, both the novel and the play have one virtue—they attempt to point out the fundamental truth that there are good Jews, even though to make this startling truth palatable, the author must bestow upon the Jew in the play a Christian sugar-coating.

In Russian literature, Lazhechnikov was one of the first to make a conscientious, though artistically futile effort to portray a contemporary Jew humanely. But one swallow makes no summer. In his age Lazhechnikov was an exception. What then, one wonders, was the reason for this unique attitude? Was it because of Lazhechnikov's deeper knowledge of the Jew, his greater freedom from alien influences, his keener artistic intuition? No, in these he certainly did not excel his contemporaries. What then, was the cause of this literary mutation? What environmental or hereditary factors were responsible for this singular divergence from type?

Here a peculiar circumstance presents itself—of all the Russian authors of this period Lazhechnikov was the only one to have emerged from the socially debased bourgeoisie. While his literary colleagues were scions of a haughty, land-owning, serf-flogging nobility, he was the

son of a merchant, i. e., he belonged to a class associated with the mart, with money, with business, with everything despised by a proud agrarian nobility. The social and economic cause of the aristocrat's contempt for the Jew was absent in Lazhechnikov's case. Economic anti-Semitism, the characteristic attitude of Russian authors during the following period, was still out of the question —the great Jewish merchant and financier had not yet arisen, had not yet become a dangerous competitor in the scramble after profits.

Altogether, Lazhechnikov's liberal views in matters of education, emancipation, social improvement, and Jewish problems are suggestive of a tendency which came to the surface a decade and a half later, during the *early* period of bourgeois expansion and sweeping reform. Thus Lazhechnikov is a unique combination. Thoroughly traditional in his treatment of some aspects of the Jewish theme, and in this a true product of his age and an indubitable echo of Western influences, still, owing to his bourgeois origin, he re-reflects the stenciled types and images in a way all his own. Apparently an exception, he is really an illustration of the rule that the class psychology and the class bias of an author determine to a considerable extent that author's artistic perception of the world.

6. *N. V. Gogol* (1809-1852). Compared to the writers of Central Russia, Gogol had at least a superficial knowledge of the Jew. In the Ukraine, where this author was born and spent his youth, the Jew had lived for centuries, had played an important, if not admirable, part in its destinies and struggles, had been a significant factor in rural and city life, and had for a long time been one of the colorful details in the motley panorama of Ukrainian ethnology.

It was natural, therefore, that, together with the host of

Little-Russians, gay Cossacks, as well as Tartars, Turks, Poles, and old-fashioned landowners, the Ukrainian Jew should make his mercurial appearance in the stories dealing with the writer's native steppes. Jewish peddlers, coachmen, "arendars," and publicans speckle these humorous extravaganzas. Though not much space is alloted them, one feels in these hastily executed sketches the sure hand of a master familiar with his subject.

Depicting contemporary life and manners, the author omits all the traditional clap-trap so inelegantly manipulated by the Central Russians—no spies, no purveyors of illicit pleasures, no beautiful Jewesses carrying on erotic adventures with the Christian gentlemen, no medieval Solomons and Moseses and Zkharias. We see the features and the traits of living Jews through the distorting spectacles of a Little-Russian. Contempt? . . . Certainly, not without that. But one feels sincerity in this contempt. There is nothing bookish or artificial about it. It is a living experience, an emotion common to all the Ukrainians of the period. Gogol does not hate the Jew; he is used to him. The relationship here is too subtle and too complex for Gogol to fling him "some shekels and curse the old Jew"—no such stilted romanticism, no such histrionic gestures—he takes the Jew for granted, as his heroes take him for granted. Now he is amused at the scene of a couple of shivering Jewish limbs being bitten by an exuberant mongrel ("Ivan Feodorovich Shponka") again he joins a crowd of good-natured peasants at the Sorochintsi fair who are being diverted by a drunken Jew chastizing a woman. ("A Fair at Sorochintsi.") There is no malice in his heart, as there certainly was no malice in the heart of Ivan Nikiforovich when the latter "felt about him and got hold of his snuff-box . . . 'That Jew at Sorochintsi makes good snuff. I don't know what he puts in it, but it is so very fragrant. It is a little like tansy.

Here, take a little, and chew it; isn't it like tansy?'" ("How Ivan Ivanovich Quarreled with Ivan Nikiforovich.")

Dear old Ivan Nikiforovich never thought that there was the "smell of Judas about the Jew." We can imagine him meeting the Jew on the road, making some friendly droll remark, inquiring about prices and goods, telling the Jew of some ailment or gossip, shaking his finger at him and condescendingly calling him a "clever rascal." The Jew is so far below, he is at times so useful, he is invariably so comical that there is really no reason to be angry with him. At times Ivan Nikiforovich even gets into a religious discussion with the Jewish peddler, but there is always the poise and self-assurance of superiority.

In the historical romance, *Taras Bulba,* however, the author adds a grain of acerbity to his derision. Describing one of the massacres in the middle of the seventeenth century (1648-9) he is titillated by the humor of the situation:

"'Hang all the Jews!' rang through the crowd...the crowd flung themselves upon the Suburb with the intention of cutting the throats of all the Jews. The poor sons of Israel, losing all presence of mind, and not being in any case courageous, hid themselves in empty brandy casks, in ovens, and even crawled under the skirts of their Jewesses; but the Cossacks found them, wherever they were.

"They seized the Jews by the arms, and began to hurl them into the waves. Pitiful cries resounded on all sides; but the stern Zaporozhtzi only laughed when they saw the Jewish legs, cased in shoes and stockings, struggling in the air."

This description is "conscientiously realistic"—the Cossacks did laugh, just as Kukolnik's patriotic jester, Sereda,

laughed when he exclaimed, "Burn, Judas, we will stand and laugh at the amusing fires of Jewish punishment" ("Prince Kholmsky"), just as the suave Turgenev ("The Jew") and the erudite Dahl ("Concerning the Thievish Jew and the Bearded Gipsy") could not help smiling at the incongruous way in which a Jew expressed his aversion to physical pain.

The portrait of Zhid (Jew) Yankel, the Jewish character in the story, is a biting caricature. There are many inaccuracies, distortions, and exaggerations. But like all caricatures drawn by the hand of a genius, this one of Gogol's succeeds in seizing and exposing some characteristic traits, traits which were evolved and preserved in the hostile environment in which the Jew had to carry on his struggle for existence.

Gogol keenly observes the peculiar Jewish adaptability and irrepressibility, the uncanny way in which some Jews penetrate, by hook or crook, into the tightest corners, into the most dangerous places, and somehow manage to survive.

Only a few minutes after the Jews were being massacred and Yankel had been saved by Taras from the hands of the infuriated Cossacks, Taras walked out to the outskirts of the Siech.

"As he passed through the Suburb, Taras Bulba saw that his Jew, Yankel, had already erected a sort of booth, with an awning, and was selling flints, screw-drivers, powder, and all sorts of military stores needed on the road, even to rolls and bread. 'What devils these Jews are!' thought Taras; and riding up to him, he said, 'Fool, why are you sitting here? Do you want to be shot like a crow?'

"Yankel in reply approached nearer and, making a sign with both hands, as though wishing to impart some secret, said: 'Let the noble lord but keep silence, and say

nothing to any one. Among the Cossack wagons, is a wagon of mine. I am carrying all sorts of needful stores for the Cossacks, and on the journey I will furnish every sort of provisions at a lower price than any Jew ever sold before. 'Tis so, by heavens! by heavens, 'tis so!' "

Taras Bulba shrugged his shoulders in amazement at the Jewish nature, and went on to the camp.

Another very apt observation is the Jewish lack of sympathy for the feelings and problems of other nations. The Jew is so Hebrao-centric, he is so conceited in his misery, he is so convinced that only the woes of the Chosen People are God's concern, and that the other nations, the Goyim, are God's step-children whose tribulations are not worth taking cognizance of, that he even fails to grasp how it is possible for a Gentile to have these noble feelings to which he, as Jew, has the sole right. It has been for a long time his unfortunate experience that no matter who was in the right, the Jew was the one to suffer. The treatment accorded to him had been such that he finally lost all sense of distinction: All Gentiles are alike, "alle yevonim hoben ein ponim."

This of course does not, in the main, hold true of modern Jews living in liberal countries. Here the Jew tends to become absorbed in the life and culture of the dominant races; and from a megalo-maniacal self-adulation he often swings into the chasm of an inferiority complex. He becomes extremely touchy about his Jewishness. He is in the seventh heaven when he is told that he does not look Jewish. He takes great pride in not knowing his people's language, life, or literature.

In the Seventeenth century it was not so. Yankel would never forgive a Jew who forsook the Jewish people. To him a baptized Jew in the family would have been an unspeakable disgrace. He would not dare look into an "honest" Jew's face. He could not marry his daughter

into an "honest" Jewish family. The stain would persist unto the third and fourth generations. For a Jew to desert his people, even to vary from the tribe in mere externals, would appear to Yankel a heinous crime, blackest treason. Whatever the historical justification, this attitude persisted in the Jew for a long time; traces of it are still to be found.

Yet, when Yankel imparts the news of Andrei's treason to Andrei's father, and Taras, indignant, refuses to believe, the following dialogue takes place:

"Then it means, according to you, he has betrayed his native land and his faith?"

"I did not say that he has betrayed anything; I merely said that he had gone over to the other side."

"And you did not kill him on the spot, you devil's brat?" shouted Bulba.

"Why should I kill him? He went over of his own free will. What is his crime? He liked it better there, so he went there."

Was Yankel an internationalist, then? Was his philosophical poise due to his cosmopolitanism, or was it merely that both sides were one side to Yankel—the non-Jewish side? Had such a misfortune befallen him, had his son betrayed his people and his faith, Yankel would have thrown all logic to the winds, he would not have said, "What is his crime? He liked it better there so he went there." Here our author's insight is unimpeacheable.

But Gogol's penchant for exaggeration sometimes gets the better of him. The description of Yankel's prayers is irreverent burlesque. And in the following passage he magnifies, it would seem, the leech-like qualities of the Jew:

"This Jew was the well-known Yankel. He was there as revenue-farmer and tavern-keeper. He had gradually got nearly all the neighboring noblemen and gentlemen

into his hands, had slowly sucked away most of their money, and had strongly impressed his presence on that locality. For a distance of three miles in all directions, not a single farm remained in a proper state. All were falling in ruins; all had been drunk away, and poverty and rags alone remained. The whole neighborhood was depopulated, as if after a fire or an epidemic."

To emphasize further the rapaciousness of the Jew and to show that it was a propensity belonging not exclusively to Zhid Yankel, Gogol adds this bit of psychological generalization:

"The first thing that crossed Yankel's mind was the two thousand ducats offered for his visitor's head [The visitor was Taras, who had once saved the Jews' life], but he was ashamed of his avarice, and tried to stifle *the eternal thought of gold, which twines like a snake about the soul of a Jew.*"

Gogol did not mince words. Viewing in retrospect the suffering of his people, he worked up a hatred for the oppressors and exploiters of his native land to the point of forgetting his direct and immediate impressions. That is why the italicized words in the above quotation sound so forced, so rhetorical, so contrary to artistic verisimilitude.

Thus the contempt which Gogol felt for the Jew of his day was fanned into hatred by the process of historical retrospection. The Jew of the Seventeenth century had been relatively high on the economic ladder, and the mere contemplation of such a state, even through the haze of almost two centuries, was enough to arouse the patriotic ire of the profoundly Christian Gogol. All this accumulated ire he poured into the image of Yankel, the ghost of whom has been stalking through the pages of Russian literature for a long time.[26]

Still, the famous historian of the Jewish people, Dubnow, appears a little too acidulous and sweeping when he says:

"In Gogol's *Taras Bulba* (1835-1842) the Jew bears the well-defined features of an inhuman fiend. In the delineation of the hideous figure of 'Zhid Yankel,' a mercenary, soulless, dastardly creature, Gogol, the descendant of the haidamacks, gave vent to his hatred of the Jew. In these dismal historic tragedies, in the figures of the Jewish martyrs of old Ukraine, Gogol can only discern 'miserable, terror-stricken creatures.' Thus one of the principal founders of Russian fiction set up in its very centre the repelling scarecrow of a Jew, an abomination of desolation, which poured the poison of hatred into the hearts of the Russian readers and determined to a certain extent the literary types of later writers."[27]

7. *F. V. Bulgarin* (1789-1859). A contemporary of Pushkin and Gogol, and at one time so popular that he rivalled them in the fame he achieved through his endless historical romances and didactically satirical novels, was the renegade Pole, Bulgarin. He is now completely and deservedly forgotten. Inasmuch, though, as he was widely read, the image of the Jew he had created was one more brick added to the tower of traditional prejudice.

His satirico-moral chef-d'œuvre is *Ivan Vyzhigin.* In the course of his adventurous peregrinations, the hero of the novel, Ivan Vyzhigin, the Russian Gil Blas, falls into the service of the publican Jew, Movsha. Ivan helps the Jew in many illicit operations; he eavesdrops on the questionable guests stopping at the Jew's tavern, he assists the Jew in rubbing with a cloth the gold coins left in the latter's charge, he goes with the Jew on smuggling expeditions. In explaining his participation in such compromising ventures, Ivan Vyzhigin says that he would not have the slightest desire to serve the Jew, had

it not been for the lure of occasional rewards, and had not hunger forced him to be the tool of the Jew's politics. Ivan apparently never thought that the Jews could have offered reasons much more cogent than his own in justification of their "politics."

Bulgarin had no knowledge of the inner, spiritual life of the Jew, but, since he came from Poland, he did know the Jewish "arendar," alehouse- and inn-keeper, in his relation to the outer Christian world. Bulgarin had only perceptions and no artistic intuition to guide him. Still, Movsha, at least in his physical features and social relations, is more or less representative of the "mayofesnik" type of contemporary Jew.

Movsha reminds one of Gogol's Zhid Yankel, except that the former has more of the "mayofesnik's" fawning and servility. There is another point of similarity—Gogol's rhetorical description of the rapaciousness of Yankel seems to be echoed in Bulgarin's inflated description of the same admirable trait in the character of Movsha:

"The Jew, like a real vampire, was sucking the slumbering humanity on the Gologer Estate, he was growing rich, and, like a mire, absorbing all the life-giving moisture, drained the surrounding sources of wealth, and generated poverty and sterility everywhere."

The sucking propensity of the Jew, his comicality, his devastating influence on the locality in which he operates, run quite parallel in both cases.

8. *V. I. Dahl, The Cossack from Lugansk* (1801-1872). In his story—or rather collection of humorous anecdotes —"Concerning the Thievish Jew, and the Bearded Gipsy," Dahl displays an incomparably better knowledge of the contemporary Jew than any other Rusian author of the period, except probably Gogol, who, like Dahl, had come from the Ukraine, where there were many Jews.

That Dahl knew the ways and manners of the Jew is

evident from a multitude of little references, quotations and Yiddish ejaculations strewn throughout these anecdotes. The Jew Dahl describes belongs to the "luftmensh" category. His Jew, Itska, is not very clever nor especially well adapted to his environment. He is stupidly gullible, and is repeatedly cheated and fooled by the gipsy, as well as by his Ukrainian servant. Extremely timid and easily bullied, he is rather the victim than the exploiter. Of course he tries to make a living; but notwithstanding the help of his wife and his very young son, Itska lives in poverty.

Not that Dahl was particularly disturbed by, or even slightly sympathetic with the suffering of Itska. On the contrary, the "Cossack from Lugansk," finds it very amusing to expatiate on all the troubles of Itska.

How gleefully Dahl tells of the Jew's losing his three horses. The thievish Jew cheated by the still more thievish gipsy is a situation rich in comical possibilites. Dahl makes the most of these possibilities. We cannot help laughing with the author; he tells such corking good stories. Dahl is particularly hilarious when he goes in for slap-stick comedy. To describe how a Jew was banged in the eye, or kicked in the back, or pulled by the beard, affords so much pleasure to this dignified Academician and great ethnologist that he reverts to it constantly. Like a good-natured, happy child he seems to clap his hands, hold his sides, and go off into a long, infectious guffaw.

There is, for instance, this humorous episode. Itska goes from Shklov to Berdichev. His driver is a shrewd Ukrainian peasant. When the Jew expresses his fear of robbers, the peasant plays a trick on him; he tells the Jew to hide in a sack and to pretend that he is glass merchandise carried by the peasant to the market. The Jew is instructed to make the sound *dzin, dzin,* should it

happen that the robbers strike the sack. The Jew acquiesces and is safely tied in the sack. The peasant Ivan, by changing his voice, impersonates robbers. He keeps on pommeling the sack with a stick, while the unfortunate Jew keeps on crying *dzin, dzin.* Thus Ivan beats the Jew to his heart's content, and earns in return the Jew's eternal gratitude. A clever trick played on the Jew!

Another episode is even more amusing. Two wagonloads of Jews meet on a narrow road. The two peasant drivers are obdurate, neither wants to make way for the other. After a prolonged altercation, one of the drivers seizes his whip and, to punish his opponent, begins to lash the Jews in Ivan's wagon. Ivan, utterly enraged at this lawless procedure, and to avenge himself on the other peasant, jumps down and begins to thrash the Jews in the other's wagon. Itska is delighted, his heart overflows with gratitude. "Thank you, Ivan my heart, thank you for standing up for us; for this I'll give you a glass of vodka and a chunk of ham."

And thus in most of the stories Dahl manages to chastise the Jew. He even goes out of his way to inform the reader of a variety of ways of torturing the Jew which he did not have occasion to utilize in his stories:

"Now his skull-cap is thrown on the oven and a price for redeeming it is settled upon—the mark of a cross drawn with a pencil on the Jew's forehead. Though the Jew weeps, he consents; he wipes the cross off with his sleeve, and, receiving his skull-cap, hastens home. In the morning he is ready to cut his own throat; the cross is drawn with lunar caustic, it comes out on the Jew's forehead in a red, purple, and finally black color. Or two zhidoks (little Jews) would be made to compare their respective heights by standing with their backs close to each other, their side-locks could then be tied in a dead knot. Or two Jewish beards would be pasted together

with wax or tar; or having their beards pasted to the edge of a table, the two Jews would be forced to stare directly upon each other's noses until they would begin to quarrel and fight; or a red-hot coin would be tossed up in the air and the Jew would scorch his paws..."

Despite the fact that he knew the Jew, Dahl never went in his art beyond the vaudeville type of Jew. It is this type of Jew that still holds the stage, and that offers ample food to the dull-witted compilers of joke-books. Malice? No... they simply loved to "tease the Jew," as Dostoievsky later said, "just as one would tease a dog, a parrot, or any other trained animal..." (*House of the Dead.*)

Dahl stresses the comical in the Jew. Yet, the Jew's greed is not glossed over. It is through a sort of occult "magnetism" that the Jew gets the money out of the pockets of unsuspecting Christians.

Nor is the Jewish woman ignored. Of course Dahl knew too much of Jewish life to draw a Naomi (Lermontov), a Mirza (Lermontov), or a Revekka (Pushkin). Khaika, Itska's wife, was fully worthy of her husband. She was even more of a cheat than he. To short-change a peasant, to overcharge, or to short-weight, was her specialty.

9. *I. S. Turgenev* (1818-1883). Turning back to Great Russia, we discover that by the fifth and sixth decades of the last century a great change had taken place in the literary fashions then current. The romanticism of the earlier decades had definitely disappeared, and realism had finally triumphed as the universally accepted literary genre. The old Jewish stencils—the Romantic, the Biblical, and the Medieval Jews, the Shylocks and the Jessicas, the spies and the murderers—could not, of course, suit the general spirit of the new school. Literary criteria had changed. A Russian writer, depicting a Jew,

could no longer resort to ready-made Western patterns, without encountering the disapprobation of the critics and the readers. He had to make at least an attempt at what the readers and the critics would deem verisimilitude. For we must remember that by the Forties and Fifties the Jewish Ghetto had been a part of the Russian Empire for over seventy years, a long enough period for the Russians to have learned that poisoners, alchemists, and necromancers were not true pictures of the Jew. Furthermore, the Jewish images created by Gogol, Bulgarin, and Dahl were conducive to the adoption of a new pattern—the Yankel-Movsha-Itska pattern.

Though literary fashions had changed, though the Russian writer was forced more and more to rely on his own ingenuity rather than on the traditional products from the West, though romanticism had entirely disappeared, the Russian author's old feeling of contempt for the Jew was still vigorously alive. It could not disappear, for the Great Russian writers, still recruited from the serf-owning agrarian nobility, were still possessed of their aristocratic class bias. The forms, however, into which their feeling of contempt was now being poured were beginning to take on more life-like, though extremely distorted, contours.

Disparagingly realistic details, much in the burlesque style of Dahl and Gogol, are found in the Jewish portraits drawn at about this time by the three Great Russians—Turgenev, Dostoievsky, and Lieskov. In the first mentioned, however, the quasi-realistic touches (Jewish gibberish, contemporary Jewish costumes, the more widely known Jewish types: the "mayofesnik," the "luft-mensh," etc.) are still interwoven with numerous anachronistic strains. Take, for example, his early story "The Jew" (1846). Here the old-father-young-daughter-Gentile-lover pattern still supplies the plot. The Jew is still covet-

ous and still a spy. The Jewess is still physically alluring. The general attitude is still suggestive of ancient Western traditions. Yet, because of a few superficial pseudo-realistic touches, "this story was regarded by the Russian critics as being distinguished for its conscientious realism—especially in the portrait of Herschel." It is this opinion of the critics, rather than the intrinsic worth of the story, that makes the latter loom up as a peculiarly significant revelation of the ideas the Russian intelligentsia of the Forties had as regards the Jew.

Turgenev's "The Jew" is a rather interesting, vividly related army story. It deals with the curious experiences of a young cornet in a Russian Cuirassier regiment. The story takes place in the year 1813, before Dantzig. The lovable cornet tells how, weary of occasional fighting and perpetual gambling, he began to feel a vague restlessness, a gentle yearning for feminine caresses, affection, and passion. Unfortunately, it appeared that this yearning was not destined to culminate in anything tangible. However,

"Once," to quote the cornet's own words, "exhausted and sleepy, I emerged into the open air and sat down on the glacis . . . I looked about me, then fell into a doze where I sat. A cautious cough awakened me; I opened my eyes and beheld before me a Jew, about forty years of age, in a long-skirted grey kaftan, shoes, and a black skull-cap. This Jew, Herschel by name, was constantly haunting our camp, intruding himself on agents, furnishing us with wines, edibles, and other trifles; he was small of stature, thin, pock-marked, and red-haired; he was incessantly winking his tiny eyes, which were also red; he had a long, crooked nose, and was eternally coughing . . . He began to wriggle about in front of me and make low bows . . ."

After a bit of circumlocution, the Jew finally suggested that he would provide the officer with a young lady, "such

a beauty, your Well-Born, such a beauty!..." The officer "tossed the Jew a ducat" as a deposit.

At night the Jewess was brought. She was beautiful. "Her thick black braid of hair encircled her little head twice. I sat down beside her," continues the officer, "and took her dark-skinned, slender hand. She resisted a little, but seemed to be afraid to look at me, and her breath came unevenly. I admired her Oriental profile—and timidly pressed her cold, trembling fingers."

The officer's amorous venture resulted in a perfect fiasco. The girl proved quite intransigent. Besides, Herschel was an incorrigible nuisance; at the most intense moment he would protrude his head into the tent and shake his finger at Sara. Twice did the Jewess come to see the officer, and each time her visit came to nothing, except that the Jew succeeded in wheedling out a respectable sum from the naïve cornet. It was then disclosed that the Jew was a spy. Condemned to be hanged, the Jew became hysterical.

"'Your Well-Born,' he mumbled: 'look, your Well-Born, look... for she—this young maiden here—you know—she is my daughter.'

"'Your Well-Born,' he screamed:—'I didn't go away from the tent. I wouldn't, for anything...' he paused and shut his eyes for a moment... 'I wanted your money, your Well-Born, I must confess, your money...but I wouldn't for anything...

"'But now, if you will save me,' said the Jew in a whisper—'I will command—I...you understand?...everything...I'll do anything...'"

Of course, nothing was of any avail. "The soldiers took Herschel under the arms. Then I understood why they had laughed at the Jew while Sara and I had run in from the camp. He really was ridiculous, in spite of all the horror of his situation. The torturing anguish of depart-

ing from life, from his daughter, from his family, was expressed in the case of the unhappy Jew by such strange, hideous contortions of body, by such shrieks and skips, that we all smiled involuntarily . . . "

Here we have a typical Jewish portrait, the " conscientious realism" of which impressed the Russian critics. All the elements of medievalism combined with the external features of the "mayofesnik" are compounded into an image incredible for its ugliness and moral depravity: A spy, a coward, a wretch who exposes his daughter to indignities for money, a monster who is ready to sacrifice his daughter's innocence to save his own neck from the noose, a comical figure who even makes the liberal, polished Turgenev smile together with the "jeering soldiers," "in spite of all the horror of his [the Jew's] situation."

The girl, too, is described by the young officer, who was blessed with "one of the glorious Russian faces," in the accepted manner: "Oriental profile," "dull amber tint" of skin, "bluish reflection of black hair," "little hand," etc. And she, for all her beauty, was the accomplice of her loathsome father!

The ugliness of the parents and the charm of their young female progeny is a recurrent motif in Russian literature. How a modern geneticist would account for the singular phenomenon that an odious male like Herschel and a "hideous, dishevelled Jewess" like his spouse could be the parent stock from which exquisite beauty would spring forth, is difficult to tell. He might suggest: either that this observation should be relegated to the limbo of details not "conscientiously realistic;" or that beauty among Jews is a sex-age-linked characteristic!

In his later years, owing to his prolonged sojourn in Western Europe and to his coming in contact with Jews of the type of Antokolsky, the famous Jewish sculptor,

Turgenev became a bit more mellow in his sentiments toward the Jew. This change was reflected in the "Hapless Girl" (1868) and in "The End of Chertopkhanov" (1872). In the first story the author reveals his sympathetic understanding of the tragedy in which a Jewish woman finds herself when she ventures to enter into intimate relations with men not of her race. In the second story, the Jewish character, a "mayofesnik," though ridiculous and physically repulsive, is shown to be capable of gratitude, magnanimity, appreciation of any kindness shown to him (shades of Scott!).[28] But these stories, written in a different period, and in the civilized, suave atmosphere of Western Europe, are not typical, and, therefore, from the point of view of this study, not pertinent. Truly typical, therefore really pertinent, are the purely Russian reactions of Dostoievsky and Lieskov.

10. *F. M. Dostoievsky* (1822-1881). For once, Dostoievsky, the austere prophet and supreme tragedian of Russian literature, had broken out into laughter. Gruesome and harrowing was this jovial, contemptuous laughter coming forth from the depths of the *House of the Dead.* Out of the horrors of Siberia this laughter resounded throughout the world, and it still reverberates in the souls of those who have a delectation for something truly "funny."

The joke was Isay Fomich Bumshtein—a convict, a Jew. "Every one without exception laughed at him," remarked Dostoievsky. "He was the only Jew among us, and I can't think of him even now without laughing . . ." "Everyone roared with laughter . . ." "Heavens, how killingly funny he was!" "His arrival in the prison was fearfully funny . . ." He was "teased, and not out of ill-feeling, but simply for diversion, just as one teases dogs, parrots, or any sort of trained animal." Indeed, Isay

Fomich was funny, "He was a most comical mixture of naïveté, stupidity, craft, impudence, good-nature, timidity, boastfulness, and insolence!" But for the "good-nature," this is, no doubt, an imposing collection of qualities to be concentrated in one man. In addition, he "was charged with murder," and "of course he was a pawnbroker . . . and supplied the whole prison with money at an interest and on security."

"A silver ruble, no, but seven kopeks maybe!"

These were the first words uttered by Isay Fomich in prison . . . "as he was briskly turning over the rags" offered him for sale.

A moral deformity, Isay Fomich was physically, too, far from being handsome. Beholding him, Dostoievsky "could not help recalling Gogol's Jew Yankel in *Taras Bulba,* who, when he undressed at night and prepared to get into the cupboard where he slept with his wife, looked exactly like a chicken. Isay Fomich, our Jew, was the very image of a plucked chicken. He was a man about fifty, short and weakly built, cunning and conceited, and, at the same time, decidedly stupid. He was covered all over with wrinkles, and his forehead and each cheek bore the marks of having been branded on the scaffold."

It must have been soothing to the Jew to know that he was liked by the Poles "perhaps simply because he amused them," and that "he was liked indeed by the other convicts, too." Dostoievsky even assures us that he and Isay Fomich "were great friends," and that the latter was teased not "out of ill-feeling, but simply for diversion, just as one teases dogs, parrots . . . "

How much credit it does to the common sense of Isay Fomich—who said he was stupid!—how infinitely more lovable it renders him, when we are informed that he "saw clearly" the nature of the teasing and that "he was not in the least offended."

How delightfully human he appears, when it is revealed that Isay Fomich, at the age of sixty, was not devoid of romantic aspirations. After his prison term he intended to remove all traces of branding with the aid of some mysterious ointment. "Else I shall never be able to get married," he once said to Dostoievsky, "and I certainly want to get married."

How much dignity is added to Fomich's personality when it is disclosed that he even enjoyed making a show of his religious ritual. "He tied phylacteries on both hands [Here Dostoievsky failed in his observation: Jews do not tie phylacteries on both hands] and tied some sort of wooden ark by means of a bandage on his forehead, so that it looked like a ridiculous horn sprouting out of his forehead. Then the prayer began. He repeated it in a chant, uttered cries, spat on the floor, and turned round, making wild and absurd gesticulations." The entire ritual is described in a similarly solemn and sympathetic vein. The spitting and the fantastic behavior are reminiscent of Gogol's description of the same ceremony performed by Yankel.

Like Gogol, too, Dostoievsky is impressed with Jewish adaptability:

"Aie, Jew, you'll get the whip, you'll be sent to Siberia!"

"Why, I am in Siberia now."

"Well, you'll go further."

"And is the Lord God there too?"

"Well, I suppose He is."

"Well, I don't mind then. If the Lord God is there and there's money, I shall be all right everywhere."

Despite his almost superhuman clairvoyance, Dostoievsky did not observe or say anything new or profound about the Jew, except the Jew's stupidity. He saw in him what the other convicts, and what most of Dostoievsky's con-

temporaries saw in him: a petty, filthy, despicable, greedy and comical figure. One of the most original writers in the world, he was commonplace and obvious in his perception of the Jew.

His journalistic writings dealing with the Jew belong to a later and different period. There, a savage hatred fed by mystical fears resulted in hysterical, frankly anti-Semitic fulminations.

11. *M. S. Lieskov* (1831-1895). That the Jew is a coward was to the minds of most of the Russian authors axiomatic. To Lieskov, the reluctance of the Jews to be drafted into the army for a period of twenty-five years, there to be exposed to indignities, and frequently to be forced to change their faith, seemed to be a particularly cowardly and ungrateful attitude. Deprived of a semblance of civil rights, the Jews were expected to assume all the duties ungrumblingly, cheerfully. There seemed to be no way of getting rid of the Jews. And it was decided, as Lieskov very delicately put it, that "instead of shedding the blood of Russians on the battle-field, it would be much better to sprinkle the earth with Jewish blood." This would save the valuable lives of some Russians, and it would have the additional desired result of decimating the obnoxious Jews.

The Jews proved obstreperous; they resorted to all manner of subterfuges to evade this duty and save their lives. They did not think it would be better "to sprinkle the earth with Jewish blood;" the "rascals" had developed such an aversion for this pleasant duty that they began to hide their children. "And those who could not hide them, maimed them—they wept, yet they maimed them, to make them unfit."

One does not have to consult Jewish annalists—Lieskov supplies the information as truthfully as the official historians ever dared. He says: "Many Jews were

drafted into the army, adults and minors of twelve or over. There were comparatively few adults, but there was a hundred times as much pother with them as with the minors. The little ones were placed in battalions of military cantonists, where our spiritual fathers, on the order of the fathers commanders, brought these babes in the wink of an eye to know the truths of the Orthodox Christian faith and baptized them to glorify the name of the Lord Christ. With the adults it proved much more difficult, that was why they were left with their Old Testament error, and were placed in small numbers in various regiments" ("Kuvyrcollegia").

Now the story really begins. It belongs to the type of anecdote told by Dahl. It relates how three shrewd Jews were fooled by a Russian. These three Jews were so cowardly and so loath to handle a gun that, driven by despair, they hit upon the brilliant idea of fainting whenever they were told to shoot. All means were exhausted in an attempt to cure them of their inordinate penchant for a horizontal position. The "pantoffled post" carried the news of the "flopping stunt" throughout the length and breadth of Russia. Fainting spells among the Jews in the army began to take on epidemic proportions. The administration was non-plussed. The Jews were beaten, tortured, threatened—all to no avail. Ordered to shoot, they would fall unconscious to the ground. Finally, a Russian private discovered a way of curing the Jews. He had them stand on a board in the middle of a deep river. They were then ordered to shoot. A miracle happened; they did not faint. This method was responsible for the final success of drafting the Jews into the Russian army.

The physical appearance of the three Jews described by Lieskov was so grotesque that any "make-up" remotely resembling it would bring a modern vaudeville house down in an uproar; one was red, the other black, the

third spotted. The adjectives used for the designation of these colors are Russian words applicable to animals, such as the English roan, dappled, bay, etc. Sport is made of the Jews' lack of cleanliness, their ubiquitousness, and their capacity for rapid breeding.

In another story, "The Melamed from Rakushansk," Lieskov again indulges in the same kind of humor. Here he pokes fun at Jewish pharisaism, and Jewish scrupulous adherence to the letter of the law. The whole Jewish ritual is described in a tone as exaggerated and disrespectful as Dostoievsky's. Here, as there, one feels the imputation of the Jew's lack of sincerity and his love of display. The Jew wants to make a show of his religious performances, to impress people and to impress God. The Jew is benighted and bigoted; all sorts of absurd superstitions and fears haunt him. And this applies not to an ignorant Jew, but to the "Melamed" Zkharia, whom Lieskov partly described in the following words:

"Zkharia was an oldish and, for his locality, a rather rich man. His wealth he acquired owing to his wide knowledge, sanctity, and cunning. Had you known Jews well, you would not have found it surprising that these three qualities are not only compatible, but that each of them, instead of excluding, requires the other two." The Jew is so cunning that he is ready to fool God, the angels, and Satan; he is a smuggler, to boot. The episode of how this Jew lost his prestige in the community through having been fooled by a Cossack is, like the rest of Lieskov's Jewish stories, not worth repeating. They are all of the same calibre.

Lieskov's treatment of the Jew, however, is important for another reason—it represents a connecting link between two consecutive periods. This author lived one-half of his life, the most important, the formative half, through the period of Contempt. Chronologically his

works belong to the next period, psychologically, however, they may be safely placed either within the period we have been discussing so far, or on the boundary line between this and the next. The elements of contempt and hatred are so subtly interwoven in his various Jewish stories that no categorical classification is possible. Altogether contempt can be distinguished from hatred only in the extreme manifestations of these feelings, then they are mutually exclusive. Ordinarily, however, they are fused, one sometimes outweighing the other. In Lieskov's Jewish stories contempt seems to preponderate. This, together with his choice of Jewish types, his caricatures and burlesques, links him psychologically to writers such as Gogol, Bulgarin, Dahl, Dostoievsky and Turgenev. On the other hand, the palpable element of bitterness and malice perceptible in his treatment of the Jewish theme links him definitely to the group of writers of the period discussed in the following pages, i.e., the period of Hatred.

PART II

From the Sixties to the Eighties of the Nineteenth Century

PART II

FROM THE SIXTIES TO THE EIGHTIES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Crumbling Walls and New Horizons

A survey of the history of the Jew in Western Europe shows that it was only with the rise of the middle class and the strengthening of industrial capital that conditions in general became more favorable to the Jews. Industrial capital, by its very nature, is the direct antithesis of feudal landlordism and medieval guilds. While the decaying structure of the latter had to be buttressed by privileges granted by the State; the former, ambitious and vigorous, clamored for free competition. Unrestricted competition among the merchants, aggressive competition among those who were able to grant credits—these were the *sine qua non* of industrial progress. Clearly, it was to the interest of an expanding industrial bourgeoisie to remove some of the Jewish disabilities, to encourage Jewish competition in trade and industry, to gain the Jews, at least temporarily, as allies in an effort to batter down outworn, medieval economic privileges. With the rise of industrial capital, the fate of the Ghetto, like that of all other medieval guilds and corporations, was sealed. The Ghetto was doomed in face of the steady and triumphant advance of modern capitalism.[1]

Naturally, with the evolution of capitalism in Russia, a similar development was bound to take place. The Crimean War (1853-1855) had clearly demonstrated the great and dangerous weakness of the Russian Empire, and the need of reforms. Gradually modern industrialism began to make its belated way into Russia. The

moorings of the old agrarian aristocracy began to shake. The serf was set free. Manufactories began to spring up, railroads to be built, canals to be dug. The middle class —merchants, industrialists, builders, and financiers—began to raise their heads. The bloated speculator and money shark gained ascendancy. Together with the rising bourgeoisie, its twin brother liberalism was born. A wave of judicial, political, and educational reform swept over the land.

Here, too, the sudden rise of capitalism had its effect on the destinies of the Jew. The Government, feeling the need of clever merchants and financiers for the young and still unhardened Russian industry, shut its eyes to some Jews settling outside the Pale, and even permitted Jewish merchants of the first guild free domicile. Altogether, the law restricting Jews to live within the Pale was not closely observed during this period. The Jew with his business training and commercial traditions took advantage of the situation. He burrowed his way into Russian life and industry, and very soon had amassed great fortunes and established mighty financial dynasties. It was at this time that the names of the Poliakovs, Varshavskys, Ginzburgs, and a few others, were engraved in golden letters on the honor-rolls of successful speculation. By 1872 the Jewish financiers, though not very numerous, had become so conspicuous that N. K. Mikhailovsky (1842-1904),[2] the famous Russian critic, declared: "...the great powers of our contemporary world are different from those of the last century. Comparing the figures of the magnificent Prince of the Taurida[3] with that of Samuil Solomonovich Poliakov,[4] one may regret that *ceci a tué cela;* one may welcome it... but the fact cannot be denied: *ceci a tué cela.* Whom does all Russia know? Not military leaders, not princes, but the Samuil Solomonoviches..."

However, despite the weakening of the rigor with which Jewish disabilities were enforced, only a small percentage of Russian Jewry was actually absorbed into Russian life. Besides the Jewish financier, a number of Jewish intellectuals, the "maskil" assimilators, hastened to take advantage of the newly opened opportunities. These intellectuals, however, were in the background, and completely obscured by the Jewish capitalist. The latter was, no doubt, an upstart. He knew that he owed his position to his wealth, and he did not hesitate to display his riches. In his eyes Mammon superseded Jehovah. He adopted the ways of his Christian neighbor, but, being incapable of rapidly assimilating the views and interests of Russia, he waxed into an overbearing, inflated, simulating, and, when necessary, obsequious money-bag. He penetrated into Petersburg and Moscow, built himself mansions, shrieked for assimilation, and often became a "devout" Orthodox Christian.

In its effect upon the life of the great mass of Russian Jewry, the appearance of the Jewish capitalist was of little consequence, more spectacular than really significant. We have already seen that in Western Europe it was not until industrial capital had become strong that the general position became more favorable to the Jews. In Russia, however, industrial capital was as yet, relatively speaking, not strong, was still in its infancy. That is why the Ghetto in Russia continued to exist as before, without going through any sudden or basic changes. The mass still lived in extreme poverty, still clung to the old traditions. There was, to be sure, a considerable strengthening of economic differentiation. Class antagonisms, heretofore only vaguely perceptible, did begin to come out into sharper relief. With a Jewish bourgeoisie, a Jewish proletariat began to form. But of the bourgeoisie, only the small fry operated within the Pale;

while the big fish, the merchants of the first guild, looked for deeper waters outside the Pale, chiefly in the capitals.

Viewed from the standpoint of the Russian author, who almost invariably lived in Petersburg or Moscow, it was the emergence of the Jewish financier in the capitals that was the most significant and abhorrent phenomenon in Jewish life. From the standpoint of the objective student, however, the Jewish capitalist was not nearly so important as the new types of the middle class intellectual and the exploited worker.

For a view of these obscure and subtle aspects of Jewish life, we must turn to the Jewish literature of the period. It is only there, in contemporary Jewish journalism, literary criticism, scientific studies, and belles-lettres, that the truly momentous changes in the Jew's life and outlook are painstakingly examined and comprehensively expressed.

Take, for instance, the growth of Jewish journalism and literary criticism. In 1860 the first newspapers in the Hebrew language sprang into being in Vilna, in Odessa, and later, in Warsaw. Three Jewish periodicals appear also in Russian. By the end of the Seventies there is a considerable number of Russian-Jewish publications. Furthermore, under the influence of the famous Russian positivist critics, Dobroliubov, Pisarev, and Chernishevsky, Jewish criticism makes rapid strides. Kovner, Paperna, Abramovich, and Smolenskin write their trenchant criticisms in Hebrew, while Orshansky, Garkavy, Kulisher, Landau, and Slonimsky write in Russian. In addition to all this, books on natural sciences, geography, history, begin to appear in the Hebrew language. Moreover, imaginative literature, too, grows infinitely richer and more varied in content. Erstwhile Hebrew romanticists like the novelist Mapu and the poet Gordon turn to the realistic genre. The former, in a satirical novel, *The*

Bigot, flagellates the zealots and fanatics, kagal-leaders and exploiters, futile talmudists and parasites. The latter pitches into the affray, denouncing and arraigning traditional Judaism. M. L. Lilienblum, in an explosive volume, *Khatoth Neurim* (Sins of Youth, 1876), unveils with startling sincerity the wounds and ulcers of his distorted soul, for all of which he blames the narrow, scholastic, life-crushing, body-killing method of Ghetto education. The great Hebrew writer Smolenskin (1842-1845) publishes a vast, all-embracing epic of Jewish life, *Hathoeh Bedarkhei Hakhaim* (Wanderer in the Paths of Life). Here we see a Jewish youth pasing from one milieu to another, from one philosophy to another, a restless seeker, an indefatigable follower of will-o'-the-wisps, a hapless wanderer who finally finds eternal rest in dying for his people when the Odessa Greeks are pillaging the Jews in 1871. In *Kebhurath Khamor* (The Donkey Burial), the same author shows how the protagonist of the novel, a young Jew, is drawn into inevitable conflict with his environment because of his aspiration toward light and freedom.

On the whole, the Jewish writers are, as we see, thoroughly impregnated with the spirit of contemporary Russian literature. A rugged realism, an accusatory satirical vein, a sweeping nihilism, a ruthless determination to expose, tear down, and obliterate the dusty remnants of the past, pervade their writings. In its fashion, the Ghetto, like Russia, goes through the bitter strife between fathers and children. It, too, produces its Bazarovs[5] who swaggeringly deride the revered notions and cherished idols of their romantic fathers. Here, too, the sons are a bit too lusty and cock-sure, a bit too eager to challenge and defy, a bit too heedless of old values.

Many aggressive and talented "maskilim" turn to the Russian language. Their shibboleth is: "Our fatherland

is Russia; like her air, her language, too, must be ours."[6] And the editor of the first Russian-Jewish periodical, *Rassviet*, regards the publication of that magazine "as an event which marks the entrance of Russian Jewry into a new phase of social life, as a dividing line between the old times and the new."[7]

Two motifs run through the works of these Jewish-Russian writer:[8] First, the horrors of the past; second, a buoyant faith in the future, in Jewish denationalization, in fusion with the dominant race, in Russification. On the one hand, we are treated to a gloomy array of one-sided details from the not very distant past—forced service, bigotry, prejudice, stupid taboos, inhuman customs, stagnation, decay... With what bitterness they tell of loveless marriages, and greedy match-makers, of twelve-year-old husbands and eight-year-old wives, of fourteen-year-old fathers flogged by their teachers, of hypocrites and impostors, of sanctimonious liars... The Ghetto, we are told, has been a kingdom of darkness; the past, one continuous nightmare...

On the other hand, we are shown a glorious future in a hospitable Russia. With what incandescent faith Sarin, a typical "maskil" of the early Sixties in Levanda's novel, *Fervent Days*, exclaims: "Everything about us is stirring, bustling, crackling... Through the length and breadth of Russia, from top to bottom, there is general wreckage...the wreckage of old ideas, inveterate principles, fossilized institutions, and deeply-rooted customs. Noise, eruption, uproar; everything hastens to renovate itself; everything rushes forward to greet something new, unexpected, almost unheard of. Even our coreligionists have risen and are ready to go..." And further: "My heart tells me that in time the Russians will come to love us. We will make them love us. How? By our own love."[9]

All these declarations of love, this intense yearning to become absorbed and to find rest in the ample bosom of mother Russia, are, of course, the emotional overtones, the ideological accompaniment, of the very practical desire of the Jewish upper bourgeoisie for a broader field of economic endeavor. Not that these rapturous outpourings were insincere; they were quite as sincere as had been the glowing slogans of the American and French revolutionary bourgeoisie.

The broad Jewish masses, the lower middle class, and the poor artisans, were more truly represented in the literature written in their own language, in Yiddish. Here the emphasis was laid not so much on denationalization and Russification, as on humanization. Much of this literature, intended for popular consumption, was of inferior quality—rationalistic poetry and interminable didactic novels with noble heroes and beautiful heroines who spoke in elevated and florid language and whose ethereal love invariably triumphed, despite the black machinations of the villains. We shall not dwell on this literature of the servant girl and the cobbler, important though it was in quenching the thirst of the Ghetto for beauty, adventure, and romance, and in preparing the soil for the fine literature of the next epoch. We shall turn rather to the literary giant of this period, the "grandfather" of Yiddish letters—Sh. J. Abramovich, better known as Mendele Mokher Sforim (Mendele the Book Seller).

Mendele was an artist of the highest order, and his art was the quintessence of the Ghetto. Not a twist in the Jewish soul, not a wrinkle on the Jewish forehead, not a smile on the Jewish face, escaped his all-seeing eye. He hated everything that was ugly and rancid in Jewish life as much as he loved everything that was beautiful and promising. But whether he loved or hated, whether he derided or extolled, he always understood...

How absurd all the horrific bugaboos about the "Zhid advancing" and the Jew being "at the gates" (expressions used by the Russian authors of the period) appear when one beholds the Jewish masses as they have been embodied in the immortal works of Mendele Mokher Sforim.

For Mendele wrote for the masses and of the masses. And if one wants to know the life within the Pale as it actually was, and if one cares to make the acquaintance of the real Jew as he revealed himself to his own people, one must read this author.

Here is Mendele's description of Ghetto life in the Seventies:

"Morning. The Jews arise and sigh: they know not what to do, what to undertake, how to find nourishment ... Their faces are pale and covered with wrinkles. Their eyes wander, seeking for something to get hold of, for something to rest against ... They moan and groan, and wrinkle their foreheads ...

"I see the fair just as it is, with all its 'business,' with all its noisy mob: lean, hungry rag-peddlers, and doubled-up tailors darting hither and thither, examining and pricing everyone's clothing, seeking for someone who has a shoe worn out, or a pair of pants, or a coat, smelling out who in town needs a patch to be sewn on, who has old clothes to sell ...

"I imagined pale dead people, running about like poisoned mice, shoving their noses everywhere, trying to find a little piece of bread, to dig up something... Each one is absorbed, each one racks his brains, each one bites his lips, makes plans, spins fantasies, and, with cap pushed back to the nape of his neck, rushes off somewhere ..."

The above paragraphs are just excerpts. Mendele does not spare any details. He sees a crowd of "paupers, beggers, mendicants, idlers, cripples, melameds," etc. He

sees "twenty shopkeepers fighting for one customer." The total effect of this picture is that of a horrible nightmare.

Indeed, the Jew is at the gate...

But even the Ghetto has its holiday moods, and its beautiful moments. Follow Mendele into the home of the ragpicker Shmulik, on a Friday evening. Everything glitters and sparkles, the candles flicker gaily, peace reigns in the household. "The rag-peddler is no more a 'dog,' he is a Prince, he has obtained a new soul, a new skin; he blesses the Holy Sabbath over a cup of wine, washes his hands, sits himself at the table, his princess-wife and his children all around..." And after the Sabbath feast, "Shmulik tunes his voice for the Sabbath hymns and sings with pathos, 'How good is thy rest, thou beautiful princess-Sabbath! We run to meet thee, we entreat thee: Come, thou crowned Bride!' An end to all business, an end to all labor... The river Sambation[10] which flows noisily, turbulently throughout the week halts on the Sabbath. All voices and clatter are hushed when the Jew loudly sings his hymns... And the terrible river does not interfere with the chanting, and the angry waves are hushed...all is still...quiet reigns..."

Poor, starved Shmulik never knew that "his kingdom was coming, his complete empire" (Dostoievsky). He never had such ambitions; life was too hard, its sorrows too poignant... He sought comfort in prayer, his burden would be lightened, he would feel soothed and consoled... "It is the feeling which every Jew has experienced after he has poured out his sorrows before his God, the feeling which makes one soft, infinitely good, ready to give one's soul away, and in great love, to embrace and kiss the whole world."[11]

Hatred

1. *Economic Anti-Semitism.* Shmulik's readiness to give his "soul away, and lovingly to embrace and kiss the whole world," Sarin's faith that the Russian would come to love the Jew in response to the latter's great love for the Russian, the "maskil's" ecstatic adoption of Russia as his "fatherland," of her language as his mother tongue, were doomed to be wasted on the desert air of Russian ignorance. The walls of the Ghetto were crumbling from within. To the outer world the Ghetto was still terra incognita. In the capitals the Russian writers saw only one kind of Jew—the banker, the speculator, the capitalist. He was near, tangible, obnoxious; his irritating presence eclipsed the rest of Jewry. Such a reaction was quite natural, and in full accord with historic precedent.

Something similar had once taken place in Western Europe as a result of the growth of capitalism and the removal of Jewish disabilities. There, too, the Jew had been a pill that, though necessary to the system, was bitter to the taste. There, too, the final triumph of the bourgeoisie was followed by a strong aversion for the Jew, who, despite his recent usefulness, was now becoming too flushed with success to be viewed with equanimity. The stimulus of Jewish competition was no longer needed, the bourgeoisie was safely in the saddle, and the Christian began to resent the success of his Jewish competitor. In France, for instance, on the eve of the revolution,the Jew was humble, timid, an object of general contempt, the butt of insults and persecution. After the revolution, his disabilities removed, he showed himself in public—ostentatious, self-assertive, powerful. The slave became a master. "Such rapid exaltation was offensive. People were affronted by the wealth which the Jews had now attained the right to pile up, and recourse was had at once to the accusation—that the Jew was an enemy of

society. The wealth of the Jew, it was said, is gained at the expense of the Christian."[12]

It is not surprising, therefore, that in Russia capitalistic development, while bringing in its wake the removal of some Jewish disabilities, resulted in the emergence of new types of Jews—most conspicuously the Jewish capitalist—and in a change in the attitude toward the Jew. Here, too, contempt gave place to hatred, a change produced by immediate local conditions, and strengthened by the situation outside of Russia, where the modern international potentates had not yet loomed up on the financial heavens, and where the Rothschilds, a family of powerful Jewish bankers, with branches in Vienna, London, Paris, etc., were the financial power. Generalization was inevitable. The Jew became the symbol of the international bourgeoisie, of international capital.[13]

As far back as the Forties Karl Marx, himself of Jewish stock, remarked: "Out of its own entrails bourgeois society continually creates Jews," and "Money is the jealous God of Israel, by the side of which no other God may exist."[14] Marx, to be sure, realized that this was the natural evolution of bourgeois society, and that Christians and Jews alike were inexorably drawn into Mammon worship. In this sense he regarded the civilization of the United States of America as a "Jewish", bourgeois civilization. Ferdinand Lassalle and other socialist leaders in Europe also identified the Jew with bourgeois domination.

The Russian intelligentsia, always sensitive to Western opinion, could not help being affected in this case, particularly since conditions in Russia seemed to warrant the adoption of this Western conception of the Jew. Those of the Russians who were in closest contact with Europe show traces of this influence. Turgenev, in his "Literary Memoirs", tells of the "man in grey spectacles"

who speaks of "Zhidovstvo" (Jewdom) as having "seized power over the pockets of the entire world" and as being likely "in a short time to get hold of everything else."[15] Turgenev does not contradict his interlocutor. Herzen refers to Rothschild as the "King of the Judeans."[16] Bakunin is frankly anti-Semitic. He believes that all Jews are in one league, and that, irrespective of party or class affiliation, the Jew always works for one cause, the Jewish cause. Thus, according to Bakunin, Karl Marx and the Rothschilds are two aspects of one and the same thing. "I am certain," he says, "that on the one hand the Rothschilds appreciate the services of Marx; and on the other, Marx feels an instinctive attraction and profound regard for the Rothschilds."[17]

But, as already suggested, besides its European derivation, the change in the intelligentsia's reaction to the Jew was based on changes in the immediate conditions in Russia. The fundamental economic changes, in evidence before the Emancipation and stimulated to still further development by that event, effected a shift in the class composition of the intelligentsia, and, naturally, in that of the literary body, its most advanced and most articulate section. In our study of the "Contempt" Period, it has been pointed out that, with the exception of Lazhechnikov, all the Russian writers we studied were of the nobility. Writing with them was an avocation; not, generally speaking, a profession, a means of earning a livelihood. The practitioners of the art of writing were landowning aristocrats. But with the Sixties a new element began to make itself felt in Russian letters—this was the "raznochinets," the commoner, the bourgeois liberal, the literary merchant. Gradually, his voice rose above those of his aristocratic colleagues, and soon it was he who gave the tone to the whole profession. Furthermore, among the writers there were some impoverished noble-

men. These, of course, developed the psychology of the class to which they belonged economically, rather than that of the social class into which they had been born. But whether aristocrat or commoner, the Russian writer of this period was prone to hate the Jew. Contempt was out of the question now. The aristocrat, secure in his sense of superiority, could well afford to despise and deride the Jew, when the latter was a poor little "mayofesnik" or a harmless "luft-mensh," or a disgusting, but useful, tavern-keeper. However, we have seen that with the rise of the bourgeoisie, a few objectionably conspicuous Jews came to the surface. This could not be poohpoohed any more. The invasion of the Russian bourgeoisie was bad enough, but Jews . . . this was foreign invasion. Indignant, the aristocrat began to hate. The commoner, too, hated. But his hatred was motivated by various causes, depending on his class orientation. When he gravitated towards the bourgeoisie, he would obviously hate the Jew as a successful business competitor. When he gravitated toward the peasantry, he would again hate the Jew as a product of urban culture, as a successful bourgeois, a speculator, and an exploiter of the peasant masses. In either case, the economic cause for the commoner's hatred would be complicated by racial, nationalistic, and religious elements.

Moreover, later, during the Turkish War and the Congress of Berlin, the anti-Jewish sentiment grew even more acute. "The war of liberation of the Balkan Slavs (1877-1878) was a disappointment to Russia. Military success was not accompanied by proportionate political success, and when it was all over, Russia found herself isolated, without friends and without allies."[18] The Slavophiles and nationalists blamed the European financiers and Lord Beaconsfield—all Jews! Disraeli was indeed responsible for the anti-Russian policy of England and

the rest of Europe. Besides, during that war a few unscrupulous Jewish contractors were making unconscionable profits at the expense of the hard-pressed government. No wonder Krestovsky wrote a trilogy, *The Zhid is Advancing,* and Dostoievsky, in Slavophile indignation, wrote: "They already dominate all international politics, and what will follow—the Jews themselves know full well: their kingdom is coming, their complete empire."[19]

We see, then, how it came to pass that the entrance upon the stage of the Jewish capitalist produced a change in the intelligentsia's sentiment. Contempt gave place to hatred, old literary patterns to new. The Russian author, nobleman or commoner, was utterly oblivious of the mass of poor Jews struggling within the Pale. Mistaking the Jewish plutocrats, whom he saw in Petersburg, for the incarnation of a whole people, he poured out the venom and hatred he had for those plutocrats upon the whole of Jewry.

2. *Bourgeois Upstarts and Money Bags—Reshetnikov.* (1841-1871). In the literature of the Sixties one of the first among the Russian authors to adumbrate the undesired advance of the upstart Jew was Fedor Michailovich Reshetnikov.

Among his *Notes of Travel* (1868) two sketches, "A Day in a Jewish District," and "A Fair in a Jewish City," give this author's impressions of the Jew. Most of what Reshetnikov saw did not markedly differ from what his predecessors had seen: the petty trader, the thievish barterer, the shrewd alehouse keeper, the leech that sucks the blood of the ignorant peasant. In the second sketch we get a close view of this parasite. We see him under conditions most favorable for his proper functioning: a fair. Here the Jew is in his element, here he dominates everything about him. He grabs the most conspicuous

place on the square by bribing the police, he corners the market and forces the peasants to sell the produce cheaply, he steals, he cheats, he robs, he buys in everything, he prospers. As the fair draws to a close there is a feeling of depression among the peasants, many are drunk, even in their songs and their laughter there is something that is painfully sad. The products gone, the cattle gone, hope gone, and only a few kopecks in return. Sad indeed is the lot of the muzhik. The only one who is happy is the Jew.

" 'Look, how many goats the Jew has bought up! Akh, may the devil!...' cried a peasant and drove away."

"By the ditch a Jew, whistling cheerfully, was gathering in his thirty goats, four oxen, and two cows..." No wonder the Polish woman who sold her cow to the Jew for thirteen rubles, twelve rubles below its worth, says as she weeps:

"Oh God! what we have come to! Formerly the Jews used to bow before me, now I before them..."

Much more objectionable, therefore much more hateful, is the rising capitalist and speculator. This type is quite vividly described in Reshetnikov's first sketch. Here the reader is introduced to the proprietor of a hotel in the province. The guests are overcharged, the service is abominable, the food is wretched, conveyances are not supplied in time so that the guests' forced stay is prolonged and their expense trebled.

The proprietor is a fat, supercilious Jew, the real boss of the town.

"You don't believe me?" he shouts, "I have a million capital! a capital of a million! Freiberg, a merchant of the first guild!! Freiberg, known all over Petersburg..." Indeed, he was a financial ace, and could afford to maltreat his guests as much as he pleased.

In this sketch we get a hasty glimpse of a few more Jews. Indirectly we hear of a local Jewish bourgeois who is as unscrupulous and relentless in exploiting his coreligionists as he would be in his exploitation of the Russian peasant. Here the idea is first suggested that capital is essentially international. Here we feel that Reshetnikov's opposition to the Jew is not to the Jew as Jew but to the Jew as capitalist. We also are told of another parvenu Jew who has two big houses in Petersburg and who has become an Orthodox Christian.

3. *N. A. Nekrasov* (1821-1877). The heartlessness of the Jewish exploiter and the humaneness of the Russian one was a common delusion among the writers of the period. Thus Dostoievsky in his diary says:

"After the emancipation of the serf, who was the first to throw himself upon the Russian people as upon a victim, who was making gain chiefly out of its vices, who entangled it with his eternal commerce in gold, who immediately replaced, wherever it was possible and whenever he had time enough, the retired landowners, with the one difference, that though the landowners had been exploiting the people, they nevertheless tried not to ruin it..." while the Jew was heartless.

Nekrasov, too, evinces a predilection for the Russian. There is something about a "kulak" that is near and comprehensible. He speaks such a pure, racy Russian; he is possessed of strength, imagination, abandon; he is blessed with a real Russian soul, with a genuine Russian conscience.

Take Zatsiepin, one of the "Contemporaries" (1875) whom Nekrasov so bitterly derides—an industrial brigand "who practices robbery under the guise of honest speculation," an honored member of a gang which has to its credit "forgery of wills, murder, theft, and incendiarism." A black character, to be sure, but... a Rus-

sian, with all the melancholy, remorse, self-castigation, and inebriety of the Russian. He had once felt the power of religion and dreamt of self-immolation. He now weeps at the thought of Russia's being devoured by a pack of blood-thirsty capitalist wolves.

Bitter, bitter is thy fate ,
O my Russian land!

He stands before a group of financiers, strikes his breast, and cries *mea culpa.* The Jews present cannot even understand this dualism, this self-reproach. They think he is worried because he has appropriated government funds, and is in fear of being exposed. They express their solicitude, they proffer suggestions as to how he may escape, but Zatsiepin exclaims:

Begone, I loath your base intrigue,
I curse your ever efflorescing,
Ever grabbing, ever pressing,
Ever thieving moneyed league!

Indignant, the "Zhid-bankers" withdraw. They absolutely fail to understand him. Indeed,

Infidels never will fathom the Russian...

Zatsiepin at least has moments of self-torture. With the Jew it is not so, for "the greedy Zhid" cares "very little about Christian souls." Though "stupid," he is "expert at stealing gold," particularly, since to rob the Russian folk is as easy as "to slay sound sleepers."

No wonder Berka is successful in his contracts and speculations:

Berka has cash beyond counting,
Berka is long since a Lord...

It certainly is a new type of Jew who dares pass a Russian Prince without deigning to recognize him. Ultra-fashionably attired, a "coxcomb in precious stones," this Jew is an ardent usurer, he writes treatises on "In-

terest," he finances journalistic enterprises, he hobnobs with "renegades" from among the academic pundits who "jumped from the observatory into the whirlpool of the Stock Exchange."

At the Ballet, amidst decorated generals and State dignitaries, the author is chagrined to espy the ubiquitous Jew. In the boxes, along-side of bejewelled Russian ladies, Nekrasov again recognizes "men-Jews." Piqued, he exclaims:

Youth, and proud courage, and prowess would capture
The heart of a lady in famous old days.
Wiser, more practical present day maidens,
The idols they worship—are calves made of gold,
Embodied in Jews, grey, decrepit and quaking,
With heaps of bright coins in their trembling old hands.

Dostoievsky's Isay Fomich said: "If the Lord God is there and there's money, I shall be all right everywhere." Nekrasov's Jew forgets the Lord God, his Weltanschauung is expressed in the "Jewish Melody," which the Jewish speculators sing to Zatsiepin:

With money all troubles are gone,
With money, there is great security
(Thus chanted the Zhids all as one;
Their diction I change for more purity).
Oh, Money will take one quite far:
One flees, and one finds habitation
Beyond the long reach of one's nation,
And lives at one's ease like a Tsarrr!

Nekrasov is sufficiently wroth to mimic spitefully the Jewish pronunciation: "nasey" instead of "nshey," "Tsar" with a hard instead of a soft ending.

4. *Assimilators—Fathers and Children. A. F. Pisemsky* (1820-1881). In Pisemsky's satirical drama *Baal,* also in his pasquinade on the revolutionary movement—the novel, *Troubled Sea,* 1863—we are treated to a series of

portraits of the Jewish parvenu distressing in their malign realism.

Here is for instance Simkha Rufin, a Jewish villain (*Baal*), a liar, an ingrate, a traitor, a thief, and a coward. His employer, a Russian contractor, had saved him from starvation, brought him up, given him an education, intended to bequeath him all his property. And how did Rufin express his gratitude? He tried to alienate the affections of his benefactor's paramour; in collusion with her he plotted to rob his protector, and elope with her. The latter part of his intentions he realized. But before he married the lady, he made sure that she had appropriated enough of her benefactor's money to make him (Rufin) a merchant of the first guild. Not to be hampered in his matrimonial ambitions and thus in his commercial career, he underwent baptism. When he was threatened by his employer, he shrivelled up and offered no resistance. When he was saved, he immediately "recovered, as if he had not been beaten at all."

Rufin is a crudely drawn villain, without any redeeming features, except that he is handsome. This is an amazing detail. Never before have we met a handsome Jewish male in Russian literature. Thus Pisemsky proved himself to be an innovator of unprecedented courage. The marrying of a Jew to a Russian woman is also a new motif. In Nekrasov we saw the Russian woman exert her charms on the rich Jew, here we see her actually marrying a Jew, a baptized Jew, but a Jew for all that.

In *Troubled Sea* we are confronted with a few Jews: the rich lease-holder Galkin, his manager Joseph, his two sons, students in the *gymnasium* (secondary school).

Emanuel Zakharovich Galkin is one of the Jewish *nouveaux riches*. His home is like a palace—a very imposing and debonair doorman, very expensive furni-

ture arranged without taste, in the corners "marble statues in unceremonious nudity."

The gentleman himself has not completely yielded to civilizing influences, for in the privacy of his office he still wears a skull-cap, and he still has not managed to overcome the disgusting Jewish habit of pronouncing ZH as Z and CH as TS. Otherwise he is fully emancipated: he is baptized; he greets his visitors with a dignified "bonzure"; he carries on an illicit affair with a beautiful Russian lady of impoverished noble stock. The lady, of course, detests the old Jew, but his money is irresistibly alluring. She keeps him on a string, and he pays heavily for the privilege. He is prominent socially. His sumptuous dinners are attended by the Governor, the vice-Governor, and other important officials of state. Even the Archbishop does not disdain the Jew's delectable dinners. And the Jew tries in his own subtle ways to ingratiate himself with all the people of power and influence. He smiles at their remarks, laughs at their jokes, and trembles at the disrespectful behavior of his sons, who dare to laugh uproariously in the presence of such distinguished guests. "My Got! sutz offissals, and how they (the sons) behave..."

When the Archbishop pronounces a prayer over the food, Emanuel Zakharovich and his manager, Joseph Yakovlevich, hasten to cross themselves. "They performed this ceremony perfectly, obviously having understood their former religious error."

He bribes the officials on all sides. He grows ever richer and richer. When some one is guilty of the indiscretion of knowing and threatening to expose the source of the Jew's riches, that person is expediently dispatched to the world whence no tales are likely to come back to harass Emanuel Zakharovich. When his attentions to the Russian beauty become onerous to her,

she having become conscious of the humiliation of being a Jew's concubine, this old "Shylock," who "demands payment in flesh and human blood," ruins his erstwhile love. A toady and a hypocrite, the Jew is overbearing when he has occasion to deal with the peasant. He is always ready to shift his burdens to the back of the simple, helpless Russian mouzhik. And he does it most offensively.

"Sut up," Emanuel Zakharovich shouted at him again, "uncouth rustic . . . mouzik . . . "

This Jewish convert, this devout "nationalist," whose second name is typically Russian and who decorates his ceilings with patriotic paintings, this millionaire who exhibits a penchant for "unceremonious nudes" in marble and for genuine Correggios, this combination of "gentility and vulgarity," is, no doubt, a hideous personality.

The children are not much better than their father. In the chapter "Ungrateful Children," the author gives us a very humorous sketch of the two boys:

"At the opposite side of the table Baklanov espied two young men in gymnasium uniforms; one was very straight and graceful, the other was terribly lame, so that when he walked he leaned completely over to one side. Israel was written all over their faces. Having noticed the entering visitor, they went directly over to him.

'Papa will soon be here,' remarked familiarly and even somewhat perfunctorily the older one, with the straight legs.

'I did not know the local customs and I came a bit too early,' said Baklanov.

'That's nothing!' the older Galkin assured him. 'You are, I suppose, from the Law School!' he added.

'No, I am from the University.'

'From Moscow?'

'Yes.'

'We, I think, will also enter the University; they have a school here, too, but the professors are all beasts.'

'Why is that?' asked Baklanov.

'That you must ask them,' replied the older Galkin, derisively.

'Awful beasts!' corroborated the lame one, throwing himself over upon the lame leg."

Baklanov began to examine the room and the vicinity seen from it. The young men followed him.

" 'This house is very expensive,' began the older one, 'but it is fearfully stupidly built. Here, look,' he proceeded to open a door and point out a room built in the Arabian style, with a cupola, divans, and apparently meant for a smoking room. 'A corker, isn't it?' continued the young Galkin: 'all this is tinsel! See!' Indeed, he rubbed off the gilding with his finger.

'Papa has no taste at all!' chimed in the lame one, limping with difficulty behind his brother and Baklanov into the next room."

The guest is taken through many ostentatiously furnished rooms.

" 'There is a bit of everything here,' ventured Baklanov.

'Yes!' answered the young guide with a contemptuous grimace. 'The usual thing, you know, with a parvenu Zhid; everything done, is done for show, for appearances; nothing real.'

'Some boys!' thought Baklanov."

* * * * * * *

" 'What sort of riffraff come visiting Papa,' began the older one again, 'all kinds of little generals and officials —various rascals and grafters.'

"Baklanov's head began to swim from all this prattle. In his early youth he himself objected to much in

his parents; but to go on this way, to swing the axe so lustily and to almost shout about it in the market place —this is the devil only knows what!"

The boys, no doubt, expressed the author's views on Emanuel Zakharovich and his style of living; the remark about the parvenu Zhid, his tinsel display, his straining after appearances, was in complete harmony with Pisemsky's views. The brutal frankness with which the young men derided their father's lack of taste and his ostentatiousness reflects on their character, without impugning their good sense. Their criticism was essentially right. What the author objected to was their manner, which was that of upstarts. They, too, in their own way, were eager to impress the visitor with their superior culture and refined tastes. In their attempt to do that, they revealed their essentially coarse, plebeian natures.

A very true observation of a contemptible trait in many Jewish converts is their use of the insulting word "Zhid" in a flunkeyish endeavor to please the Christian auditor.

We meet one of the younger Galkins later in the novel. He is implicated in all kinds of revolutionary plots; he is a nihilist. The propensity manifested in his boyhood to expose, tear down, destroy, and swing the axe, persists. Before, it was the father; now, it is the State, the social and economic structure, the moral and religious foundation, the sex relations. He does not know Russian life, he does not understand the Russian mouzhik, he spouts revolutionary phrases, and hobnobs with the lowest dregs of society. The novelist depicts the Russian revolutionists and liberals in even blacker colors.

Pisemsky hated Galkin as he hated all the nihilists. The novel was a satire; in it the author did not go out of his way to spare the sensibilities of anybody. In throwing forth his bitter invectives he hurled a good many of

them at the Jew. The general impression the novel creates is that in 1863 the Jew played a tremendous and very harmful part in the life of the Nation. Like a hawk he seems to have buried his beak and claws in the vitals of Russia—the fathers demoralizing Russian business ethics and spoiling Russian officialdom, the sons ready to tear down and demolish the glorious economic, political, social, and religious structure of Holy Russia.

If the Jewish financier is also met with in Nekrasov, Pisemsky has the distinction of having introduced to us the Jewish student and revolutionist. The portrayal was unsympathetic, but it was important insofar as it pointed out the changing status of the Jew and as it reflected the original attitude of the Russian writer to the Jewish assimilator and revolutionist.

On the whole, our author really describes only one type of Jew—the assimilator, the convert. The father, his manager, and Rufin were assimilators, converts, and capitalists. In their economic and social philosophy they were associated with the Russian fathers, the governors, the vice-governors, and the archbishops. The sons were assimilators and converts who in their philosophy were associated with the Russian sons—nihilists, revolutionists, liberals. Pisemsky satirized both fathers and sons, Christians as well as Jews.

Though all the Jewish characters in Pisemsky's works are negative and repellent, no open-minded Jew would be likely to quarrel with the author. Pisemsky did not know the Jew in his natural environment. The Jew he described, while real and convincing, was typical of a very small portion of the Jewish people. The mere fact that all his heroes are converts shows that they are not representative of the broad Jewish masses. The Jew was not a convert. Throughout the Nineteenth century Russian autocracy made valiant efforts to turn the Jew

to Christianity. It failed. At various times it cajoled and threatened and forced—all was to no avail. The Jews, even those who rebelled against the people's hide-bound conservatism, were too proud to be forced into conversion. The few Jews who adopted Christianity were for the most part insincere, unprincipled, cowardly, and greedy after monetary or social emoluments. Very few Russian Jews adopted Christianity because of religious convictions. It would probably not be too much to say that by a process of natural selection the Jewish people in Russia was made up of the fittest, most heroic, most stoical type. The morally weaker, the less heroic, embraced Christianity. It is this latter type that Pisemsky so realistically describes. And this type is hated by the Jew himself quite as much as he is by Pisemsky.

5. *Vsevolod Vladimirovich Krestovsky.* (1839-1895). A third rate concocter of army stories, picturesque plots, and wearisome novels, Krestovsky, in his transition from benign contempt to intense hatred for the Jew, is the perfect embodiment of two periods.

Because of the minor position he holds in Russian literature, a closer study would be superfluous, were it not that for sheer bulk as well as for astigmatic knowledge of the subject, Krestovsky's literary studies of the Jew excel anything heretofore done in Russia. He is the author of a series of poorly written Biblical poems, of several sketches and three long novels dealing with contemporary Jews.

The poems treat the Biblical themes traditionally. The sketches are permeated with jovial contempt, the trilogy reeks with hatred.

Krestovsky's *Sketches of Cavalry Life* contain a few of his Jewish studies in the style of Dahl. They are very readable and tolerably humorous snap-shots of army life in the Western provinces of Russia. Here the Jew-

ish tailor and peddler, publican and "luft-mensh" are indispensable details of life's panorama. Like hungry birds they circle around the camp, pecking at any stray bit of food. Krestovsky like a thoughtless urchin flings little pebbles at them, "just for the fun," he does not mean to hit, nor to hurt; some birds, the females, have such fine plumage that the youngster almost waxes rhapsodical about them.

Benign contempt is consistently maintained throughout his early writings. Here we meet good-natured Khaikas, and roguish, witty Movshas, romantic and frivolous Vallias, etc. But in the sketch "Who Is Better?" dedicated by the author to his "friend Itska Yankelevich Shtraletsky," where the Jewish money lender is brought into focus, a dual attitude crops up. The whole burden of the story is that, of the two types presented, Itska Yankelevich Shtraletsky is much more considerate and human than the Russianized Anatoly Borisovich Shmetz. While the first, a product of the Ghetto, uncultured, and hindered from making a living in any other way, goes into money-lending, charges extortionate rates of interest, presses the debtor to the wall—he is at the same time flatteringly respectful, redeemingly comical, he knows and keeps his place, qualities which make him tolerable to the vain and gilded youth in the Cavalry Regiment.

Anatoly Borisovich Shmetz, on the other hand, is a prominent journalist and art critic. He poses as a connoisseur and a Maecenas; quotes poetry ad nauseum; lives in an exasperatingly grand style, makes his visitors languish in his waiting room for weary hours, is superciliously skeptical about the culture of the army officers, secretly indulges in unethical financial operations, is a usurer, an impostor and a swindler.

Mr. Shmetz is a liberal, of a very safe attentuated kind. His liberalism is mere coquetry—cautious flirtation with

progressivism. But nothing rash, gentlemen! I assure you, nothing rash!... In art Mr. Shmetz is preeminently a "Russian nationalist," here and there with even a "tinge of conservatism." In political questions, Mr. Shmetz manifests a fine sense of patriotism seasoned with a bit of "civic sorrow," just a bit, in moderation, "so that everyone may think that this Mr. Shmetz is not exactly a liberal nor what one would call a conservative, that he might (according to circumstances) become either or both."

Shmetz is a new type of assimilated Jew. He has many traits in common with the assimilated Jews found in the other writers of this period. The parvenu psychology is there. The only difference is in the degree of his Russianization. He is, after all, a Russian art critic. Superficial as he is, he must have acquired considerable culture to rise to such a status. The Jews of the Lazar Oshmiansky and Emanuel Zackharovich Galkin type were hateful, but there was enough of the comical about their speech and gestures to relieve the tension and to give the Russian authors the comfortable feeling of at least being able to ridicule the thing they hated. But this Jew enters the holy of holies of Russian life: Russian literature, Russian art. This is a type even more hateful, for outwardly there is nothing of the comical to shunt off a part of the hatred into contempt, and to bring about through laughter a partial discharge of the pent-up hatred. No wonder Krestovsky makes him a swindler and a usurer.

This sketch is symptomatic. As the Jew makes his way into modern life, as he makes his triumphant entry into commerce, music, painting, sculpture, letters, and science; the orthodox Jews, the peddlers, the petty, skull-capped, side-locked, white-socked, pantofled money-lenders and purveyors of pleasures, the contemptible old Jews, the Solomons, the Yankels, the Herschels, the Movshas,

the Itskas, and the Khaikas, are now something devoutly to be wished. Krestovsky even discovers wings sprouting on the shoulder blades of Itska. Khaika and Itska are names much more palatable than Anatoly. Contemptuous diminutives seem more euphonious when applied to a Jew, than the stiff, formal, dignified Anatoly Borisovich. Of course, Itska is better than Anatoly. Instead of sneering at the cultural paucity of the gay cavalry officer, Itska cringes before him. Itska is so grateful to the officer for the latter's honest effort to pay his debts that he becomes almost lyrical. He needs no interest, or only a nominal interest; he demands no note, he even thanks the officer for his honesty. And though the Jew utters all these noble sentiments in excruciating Russian, the officer's risibilities are not stirred. On the contrary, this Jewish flattering chatter is balm to his soul and music to his ears. Of course, Itska is preferable.

The above sketch indicates the evolution of Krestovsky's sentiment from contempt to hatred. In the trilogy, *The Darkness of Egypt,* the writer's hatred blazes up to unprecedented and all-consuming fire.

The Darkness of Egypt was engendered in Krestovsky's mind in the Seventies. In 1879 he wrote to A. Lubimov: "The more I think of it, the more seductive does the idea become. It may be expressed, so to say, in two words: 'Zhid idyot' (The Jew is coming). Indeed, look where one will, one's eye is bound to encounter the spectacle of every nook and corner being overrun with Jews. Not only here, but in Europe and even in America, which also at last begins to groan under the Jew."

That in the Seventies America was groaning under the yoke of the Jew may, to most Americans familiar with their own history, appear as a new and startling revelation. But to go on: the reason for this Jewish invasion Krestovsky discovers in the phlegmatism, the flabbi-

ness, the looseness of contemporary Christian civilization. The Jew is a menace because he is potent, "first, in the strength of his faith, second, in the physiological strength of his blood."

To cap it all, to show how deleterious the influence of the Jews was becoming, Krestovsky remarks with a shudder: "Jews have begun to appear in considerable numbers among our nihilists. A phenomenon noteworthy, but easily explained: The Jew is essentially a cosmopolitan."

To Krestovsky it apparently never occurred that the originators, ideologists, leaders, and members of the nihilist movement were genuine Russians, a species, which, according to his own reasoning, should have been neither cosmopolitan, nor deficient in the sentiments of "National and State honor and dignity, as well as patriotism."

Thus Krestovsky was fired with the determination to expose the Jew and to save Christian civilization, a rather ambitious objective for an author of his powers. Katkov and many other friends cautioned him against too obvious anti-Semitism and bias. Krestovsky did not heed their warnings. The result was an absurd literary hybrid, an incongruous cross between a pedantic theological treatise overladen with notes, references, commentaries, and all the other ostentatious accessories of "erudition," and a cheap sensational novel of a French boulevardier.

The trilogy is formidably long, the plot thrillingly entangled; the collective villain is the Jewish Kagal, the lovely heroine is a baptized Jewess, the silent sufferer is the Russian people. In an attempt to escape the tenacious clutches of the omnipresent Kagal, the beautiful and idealistic baptized heroine passes from one stratum of Russian society to another, from the aristocracy to the clergy, from the clergy to the peasantry, and so on, and everywhere she meets signs of feebleness, vice, and de-

composition. While the Jewish community which she had left behind was marvelously integrated, dynamic, and resolute in plotting and executing its secret and malicious designs, Russian society was being eaten up by the canker of its own indifference and indolence. The devil incarnate, the Jew, was at least an active force. Russia, though good, was passive, comatose.

The deeper one gets into the novel the more one becomes convinced of the forced burden of Krestovsky's argument. This mystical fear of the Jews, this exaggerated ubiquitousness and nefariousness of the Kagal and its schemes, were no new superstitions among some of the Russians. Nekrasov and Dostoievsky and others had talked of them before Krestovsky hysterically sounded his tocsin.

6. *Saltykov-Shchedrin* (1826-1889). Saltykov-Shchedrin, the great Russian satirist, has the Jew interspersed throughout his writings. It is the assimilated or half-assimilated Jew into whom this author also shoots his sharpest and most poisonous arrows. It is the petty parasite, as well as the big financier, who comes in for the severest dose of purgation.

To accomplish his artistic ends, Saltykov does not shun any of the long established modes of depiction. The Jew is comical. He smells of onions and garlic. He looks like a "plucked chicken," and speaks a specific lingo, a gibberish all his own.

In *The Diary of a Provincial in Petersburg,* (1866-1869) Saltykov-Shchedrin satirizes the crooked operations of the Jews on the stock-exchange. Here is a gang of petty embezzlers and cheats, small fry in the financial pool. We are shown the machinations of Gershka Zaltsfish.

Gershka causes the spread first of one rumor, then, of another. As the result of the first rumor, he sells his

stocks at high prices; as the result of the second rumor, he buys in the same stock very cheaply.

The description is exceedingly humorous: "Gershka jumped up from his seat as if he were scalded and began to dart about the stage. His eyes burned, his side-locks quivered, foam oozed from his mouth. 'You shaw it yourshelves, you shaw it yourshelves!' he shouted in a frenzy."

" 'We saw it! We saw it!' seconded the chorus."

" 'Yerukhim! Now run! run to the extsange...Geshwind!...And tell everyboty, perdzurers have been found! Herstu! no fake ones, dzenuine, the fery besht perdzurers! And sell a tousant bonds.' Yerukim ran away while Gershka, all of a sudden, began to whirl, hop about, beat his breast, and ejaculate wild sounds. His example was followed by the rest. This lasted for a half hour. Finally they all fell prostrate, helter skelter, and Gershka uttered in a stifled voice:

'Oi Vei Mir! and vat an awful tseat you are Yerukhim! and vat does he tell dem dere. And how can one tell sutz tings, and on di extsanze too... Dere ain't no perdzurers at all! O Yossel, O my friend Yossel! Now you run! Run to di extsanze and tell everyboty! Tell everyboty, that vat Yerukhim shays...akh! pfoi! vat does he shay! Der ain't notink of de short...no perdzurers came...and buy a tousant bonds.' "

The scene on the exchange is described in a similar vein.

In *The Grave Year* we get the fleeting image of a baptized Jew. The portrait is reminiscent of Pisemsky's Emanuel Zakharovich Galkin. His showy patriotism, his assumed religious orthodoxy, and his "truly" Russian accent are all brought out in one short paragraph devoted to him.

The scene takes place during the Turkish War. Everyone is called upon to sacrifice for the fatherland. Balls,

theatricals, bazars, are arranged, each affair occasions chauvinistic demonstrations, and affords people the opportunity publicly to display the degree of their love for country, by the size of their contributions. At a reception arranged for the newly drafted soldiers, "From among the guests there suddenly struts to the fore a contractor, a baptized Jew. At the mere sight of the young devils he is aroused to such a pitch of enthusiasm that he forthwith announces:

'A shkooner, two shkooners for each varior, I offer! For our faith!' "

This ardent gentleman must have made enough money out of the war to warrant such fervid patriotism.*

A much more striking portrait is that of Lazar Davydovich Oshmiansky, in *The Contemporary Idyll.* Lazar was a brother of Vooz Davydovich Oshmiansky, an opulent railroad builder and a Councillor of State. Lazar had long been dreaming of establishing an independent "business." He finally leased the estate of a Prince, who, in order to avenge himself on his obstreperous peasants, decided, after the peasant emancipation, to hand over his entire estate into the custody of a Jew. "Somehow, he thought that a Jew would be able to avenge him better than anybody else." What particularly recommended Lazar to the Prince was that "when he, Lazar, spoke of the

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* Nemirovich—Danchenko (1848-), in the *Princes of the Stock Exchange* (1886) also portrays a couple of rapacious Jewish financiers, Minkin and Slonimsky. These, however, are more assimilated, there is not a trace of the Jewish gibberish in their speech, nor anything typically Jewish in their manners. They are on a much higher financial plane than Saltykov's speculators. In their unscrupulousness, dishonesty, and callousness they are not a whit better or worse than their Christian confrères. By 1886, it was realized that in point of fact the Russian financier is as munificently endowed with the rapacity characteristic of the species as his Jewish colleague.

peasant, saliva would begin to trickle through the corner of his mouth, which liquid he would suck back with great relish."

"In appearance he was quite presentable. He was a 'cultivated' Jew. He realized the importance of shedding his Jewish identification marks. He came in a foppish pea jacket, colored neck-tie, gold pince-nez, his hair cut à la malcontent, without the slightest vestige of side locks." He described himself as a "Russian of the Mosaic Persuasion," and spoke Russian carefully, almost correctly. "He had crimson lips, plump hands, eyes protruding like those of a lobster, and his abdominal region revealed a distinct tendency toward rotundity."

The Jew was performing his function only too well. Besides ruining the peasants, he was ruthlessly devastating the estate, and drawing the Prince's son into ever heavier debts. Saltykov describes Lazar as "sucking," "gnawing," "devouring," etc.

Lazar's one dream was to be the owner of a "little railroad:" "Lazar had a little capital; not enormous, to be sure: but power, after all, is not so much in capital as in having on hand plenty of fools. Here his brother could help him, but Lazar would be afraid of disclosing his plans to his brother, for Vooz might swindle him."

As Lazar's fantasy begins to work, many enchanting, daring, and sinful images begin to crowd before his "inner eye."

He sees himself a railroad magnate, a great employer of labor. Never mind, he'll know how to handle his laborers, "He'll hire them cheaply, and if they demand higher wages, he'll cheat them." He'll swindle them on a wholesale scale, never separate individuals. For "if all the laborers, united, should demand an account, it would result in a riot and insubordination . . ."

And he sees himself in the metropolis, his mansion op-

posite his brother's. They are both philanthropists, and each of them has two French mistresses. Ah, he is sick, thoroughly sick, of his old Rachel and her numberless children, all these Evels, and Ruvims, and Borukhs, and Leibas, and Itseks, etc., etc. No, a change, a change... Two French mistresses for him. His wife, his children, and their staff of servants, tutors, and governesses, will live separately. He will find himself three retired generals as whist partners. "Zhidik, his French mistress, babbles away in French like mad, and he, together with his generals, sits and laughs. And what he is laughing about he does not know."

For a critical estimate of Saltykov, as well as of all the studies of the Jew perpetrated during this period, one might profitably turn to Saltykov himself. In his *Unfinished Conversations* (1873-1884), a brilliant piece of journalism, one is startled to find a very sympathetic and very humane discussion of the Jewish problem.

"It is obvious," he writes, "that in the abnormal condition of the Jewish question a fatal rôle is played by such intricacies as, in the course of time, do not only fail to become ameliorated, but on the contrary become ever more poignant. Among these intricacies, tradition indubitably holds the cardinal place. A tradition which has long lost meaning, but which still preserves vitality. Then, among the number of causes which contribute to the unshakability of this tradition one might mention, first, the unconscious caprices of racial temperament, and secondly, the utterly arbitrary conception of the Jewish type, based on a pattern not from the toiling masses of the Jewish race, but from the sphere of the exploiters and the leisured."

"There is nothing more inhuman," he continues, "and more insane than this tradition, which emerges from the black cavern of the remote past, and which, with a cruel-

ty approaching idiotic self-satisfaction, carries over from age to age the stigma of shame, estrangement, and hatred."

Saltykov feels so deeply the injustice and cruelty of this tradition, that he further exclaims:

"When I think of the condition created by the images of the ancient legend which pursues the Jew everywhere, from age to age, really, I feel as if I were going out of my mind."

"To whom would it ever occur," says Saltykov, "to point out Razuvaiev [a Russian "kulak"] as the determining type of the Russian? But when it comes to a Jew-Razuvaiev, we invariably identify him with the entire Jewish people."

A great deal of the astigmatism of the Russian writers Saltykov ascribes to ignorance:

"Indeed, what do we know about the Jews, except the concession-outrages and the methods of Jewish 'arendars' and Jewish alehouse keepers? Have we even an approximate conception of the vast mass of Jewish craftsmen and Jewish petty tradesmen which teems in the filth of small Jewish towns, which multiplies fiercely, despite its being stamped accursed, despite the ever hovering danger of death through starvation?"

Indeed, what did the great Russian writers know about the Jews? No wonder Saltykov advises his Russian reader to turn to Polish literature and especially to Elisa Orzeszko,[20] for a deeper insight into Jewish life. Neither he nor the entire host of luminaries in Russia's literary galaxy threw any appreciable light on the inner perplexing phenomena of the Ghetto.

"That is why those who wish to learn how much of the sympathetic there lies hidden in the depths of tortured Jewry, what an inexpressible tragedy weighs over its ex-

istence, should turn to this story [Orzeszko's "Mighty Samson"] every word of which breathes the painful truth."

Saltykov, in his *Unfinished Conversations* which appeared in the early Eighties, negates and endeavors to counteract the pernicious effects of a literary stencil so much abused by himself and his contemporaries of the Sixties and the Seventies. In his changed sentiment, if not in his artistic creations, Saltykov is the herald of a new era.

PART III

From the Eighties to the Revolution
of 1917

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The Ghetto in Arms

Most histories regard the year 1881 as the turning point in the destinies of Russian Jewry. Indeed, with the accession of Alexander III, the economical, political, and social situation of the Jew suddenly changed for the worse.

A probing into the preceding period unveils the causes of the catastrophe which finally broke out in 1881 with unparalleled fury. If the advance of the Jewish financier had aroused the ire of the near-sighted liberals and populists, the entrance in the Seventies of some Russianized intellectual Jews into the revolutionary parties provoked the antagonism of the government. The growth of the Slavophile sentiment during the Russo-Turkish war (1877-1878) added fuel to the smouldering anti-Jewish fire. Furthermore, the entrance of many Jews into the liberal professions made some Russian intellectuals apprehensive of Jewish usurpation of those fields. Thus the liberal Turgenev, the revolutionary Herzen, the populist Nekrasov, the anarchist Bakunin, the Slavophile Dostoievsky, the reactionaries Krestovsky and Suvorin,[1] were all joined in one chorus of resentment against the Jews. The assassination of Alexander II in 1881 brought the brewing hatred to a head. The supposed participation in this terroristic act of a Jewish girl, Gessia Helfman, was trumpeted through the length and breadth of Russia by the anti-Semitic press. And a month and a half after the death of Alexander II the first pogrom took place, in

Elisavetgrad. Within a year 150 such pogroms, most of them arranged with the connivance of the Government, were recorded. Hundreds of Jews were killed, thousands of families ruined.

Thus the straight-forward political reaction which had replaced the ambiguous policies of the preceding reign, reflected disastrously on the condition of the Jewish people. The "gloomy Eighties" were particularly gloomy for the Jews, who had become the convenient scapegoats for the various outbreaks of protest which were taking place among the desperate Russian populace.

The pogroms brought from the Russian administrative and judicial authorities explanations as to the causes: "The peasants and workers had been enslaved by the Jews," they said. This argument was insincere and obsolete. What had actually happened was this: During the twenty years reign of Alexander II, Russian industry had developed and gained strength, the Russian bourgeoisie had become independent and was not in need of any further assistance from Jewish business men. To the Russian petty bourgeois and professional, in particular, the Jew was an eye-sore of which he was very eager to get rid. The government of Alexander III came to the aid of the Russian bourgeosie. To appease the "national wrath" against the Jews, the Government instituted all sorts of persecutions; it aided and abetted the pillagers of Jewish property, and created those notorious "May Laws" which restricted the Jew's most elementary civic rights. To add insult to injury, many of the Russian revolutionists and populists saw in the pogrom an attack upon the entrenched bourgeoisie, a spontaneous elemental outburst of peasant class-consciousness, and they welcomed it in the hope that it would develop into a movement similar to those which had once been led by Stenka Razin or Pugachov. Of course acute astigmatism and an

impenetrable ignorance of conditions in the Ghetto were responsible for such a fantastic attitude. The popular onslaught and legal houndings fell with a special weight upon the petty Jewish bourgeoisie and the Jewish working class. The very rich and privileged lived in Petersburg and Moscow where there were no pogroms. Indeed the most inhuman outrages seem to have occurred in the regions where the poorest Jews lived. The upper bourgeoisie soon recovered. But the proletarization of the Jewish petty bourgeois who even before had been losing the ground from under his feet, now assumed enormous proportions. The only safety valve—emigration, which took on unprecedented dimensions—did not prevent overpopulation within the Pale. Despite the yearly exodus of hundreds of thousands of Jewish workers into foreign countries, the supply of labor within the Pale exceeded the demand. The position of the working class grew considerably worse. The differentiation of the Jewish milieu was becoming ever more sharpened.

All these cataclysmic changes in the economic and social status of Russian Jewry were bound to find expression in new attitudes and new political tendencies.

First of all, the assimilationist movement comes to a sudden and ignominious end. The ardent hopes of the early Sixties, the roseate visions of a complete fusion of the Jewish and Russian peoples, the infantile faith in the magnanimity of the Russian government, are suddenly and brutally crushed. The Russophile ebullitions of the Levandas and the Bogrovs begin to sound like ghastly jests. Cold, and cheerless, and lonely is the assimilated Jew in the Russian environment. He belongs neither here, nor there. And his soul yearns for rest, for stability, for certainty. Back, back home . . . back to his people . . . he will fall on his knees, beg forgiveness, kiss the tired, wounded feet of his bleeding and persecuted race.

And the traditions he had abhorred, he will worship; and the customs he had cursed, he will bless.

Jews who had never thought of the Jewish question before suddenly realized the crying injustice of it all. Even baptized Jews became conscious of their Jewishness. Nadson,[2] for instance, the famous Russian poet of the "gloomy Eighties," recalling the Jewish origin of his father, declared himself a Jew in the following poem:

I grew away from thee, thou lone rejected race,
And not for thee I sang in my inspired hours,
Thy lore, thy faith, thy anguish and disgrace
I did not see from my exalted bowers.
And hadst thou as of yore been happy and enthroned,
And hadst thou not been crushed by calumny and beating,
Estranged from thee, I would not have intoned
This chant of love, this brother's greeting.
But these are days of tragic bloody hue,
Beneath the yoke thou groanest for salvation;
In days like these, when thy mere name, O Jew,
Is hurled by the mob in token of damnation;
When packs of greedy beasts, thy bitter, cruel foes,
Tear, bite, and gnaw, and hiss at thee their hatred,
I humbly take my place amidst thy fighting rows,
My people, Fate-abused, but sacred.

The feeling of dejection and despair is followed by the outburst of neo-romantic reveries. As in the darkest days of Nicholas I, the Jew again transports himself in his dreams to his ancient home, to Zion, to the Biblical times. "Yishkakh Yemini im eshkokhakh yofosi" (May I forget my right hand, if I forget thee, my beautiful one, my Fatherland, O Zion). And this love for Zion, this longing for a home, gradually assumes the form of a definitely political Zionist movement.

But while the greater part of the bourgeoisie gathers about the banner of Zionism, the soil is being made ready for a working-class movement. The Social-Democratic

party, which was making headway among the Russian and Polish workers, attracted ever larger groups of Jewish laborers. In 1892 the Jewish artisans begin a struggle for a ten-hour work-day. In the middle of the Nineties the "Arbeiter Bund" is organized. The democratic and revolutionary elements of the upper and petty bourgeoisie are drawn into the workingmen's revolutionary organizations. Their influence is felt in the nationalistic aspirations of these revolutionary parties. Thus even the Social-Democratic Bund demands "national and cultural autonomy." Other revolutionary organizations come into being, bizarre crosses between Marxism and Zionism. The "Socialist-Zionist," and the "Poalay-Zion" parties attract the more nationalistic factions of Jewish workers and intellectuals. Moreover, many Jews still belong to the revolutionary parties organized by the Russians themselves: the Social-Revolutionary, the Social-Democratic, and the Iskrovtsy parties.

While the old Jews of the passing generation still retain their out-of-date ideology, still hope for the aid of foreign Jewish philantropists, still look toward the softening of the official heart, still pray in the synagogues for the health of the Czar and his family, the younger Jew in ever growing numbers devotes his energy to the movement of liberation, is active in various revolutionary parties, goes to the scaffold and dies in Siberia by the side of his Christian brother.

The Jewish writers could not, of course, pass in silence these multifarious manifestations of a fresh and throbbing life. Historians and critics, journalists and philosophers, and, above all, poets, novelists, and short-story writers, could not help revealing in their works this deluge of new ideas, slogans and passions; could not help depicting the host of new types that made their picturesque entry upon the now brightly illuminated stage of

the Ghetto. The Jewish literature of this period is so rich, so diverse, and of such a high order that no adequate idea can be given of it in the narrow confines of this work. Every mood, every stir, every new tendency in the Ghetto, finds its immediate echo in literature. Every new type is directly fixed in a work of art. It would be futile for us to attempt even a cursory survey of this period; the mere enumeration of significant names and titles would mount up to many pages.

Naturally, the despair and the doubts, the repentance and the pessimism, of the Eighties find their most poignant utterances in the writings of the Russianized section of the Jewish intelligentsia. Their disillusionment is the keenest, for their hopes were the most fervid.[3] They all write in the same repentant and despairing mood. C. J. Frug transcends his momentary despair, and becomes the singer of an ecstatic Jewish Nationalism, of Biblical themes, and prophetic incantations.

The same vigorous, self-assertive nationalism pervades all works written in Hebrew.[4] But Nationalism is not the only theme. Soon, in the late Nineties and in the Twentieth century, more universal motives are heard—modern symbolism, and a fresh treatment of erotic themes,[5] a Hellenic worship of beauty,[6] the ennui of the modern city,[7] etc. Also a great number of Yiddish poets, novelists, and short-story writers appears.[8] In all these works the old and the new, revolutionists and Zionists, rabbis and decadents, marriage-brokers and bohemians, laborers and shopkeepers, are presented to the reader.

But for our purpose it is probably more important to dwell on the Russian-Jewish writers. For it was through their writings that the Russians were enabled to come into closer contact with the inner life of the Jew. Among these, some are completely denationalized, their inspiration is of Russian origin, their contribution is to Rus-

sian letters;[9] others draw their inspiration from Jewish sources, paint the Jewish scene, and are associated with Jewish life.[10]

Owing to the latter group, there is now very little of Jewish life, past and present, that is not accessible to the Russian reader. The thief and the prostitute, the Rabbi and the Khassid, the revolutionary terrorist and the student, the lawyer and the rag-peddler, the bourgeois and the worker, the hero and the coward—all types and conditions of men are represented in their work. All possible relations, husbands and wives, fathers and children, employers and employees, Russians and Jews, are brought out in infinite combinations and permutations.

Of all these types, and of all these relations, however, the class-conscious revolutionary worker, in his relation to his environment, stands out most vividly as the most significant and hopeful element in the Ghetto.

The moorings of the ancient order are crumbling. The chasm between the old and the new is growing ever wider. The defenders of the outworn banners are sulkily retreating. "It seemed strange and incomprehensible," says Annsky, "how and whence this entirely new world had come, with new people whose spines were so straight, whose eyes were so daring, whose speech was so determined." The stuffy, sombre hive of the Jewish Suburb was stirred by the raucous sounds and martial step of the rising proletariat. And "the Suburb became frightened at the appearance of these fresh young people, with a strange fear, enormous, all-embracing... It became frightened for the Youths themselves, who were going into the fire, there certainly to perish; it became frightened for itself, too. These desperate Youths with their loud voices were bound to attract attention to those who had crawled into their caverns and holes. Their madly defiant speeches were certain to arouse the anger and fury of the forces of the

enemy, the enemy, who until now had been met at the suburb with humble words and obsequious genuflections, with moans, with tears, and with entreaties. It became frightened, finally, perhaps more than of anything else, of the Youths themselves who had cast aside the yoke, rejected all the old beliefs and traditions, everything from which the old generation drew its strength to live. In these Youths, the Suburb immediately sensed power—therefore an enemy. To the old inferno of fear and starvation were being added new sufferings, new dramas."

No wonder the old watchman, Sem, described by Yushkevich, always submissive, always with prayer books in hand, is horrified. Pointing out a young worker, he says:

"There are the enemies of the people. Here he does not look [he points at the prayer book]; what do they need it for?"

"And what does your book say that is needful to men?"

"Submit, that's what it says."

"You see! And my book says: Fight!"

The younger generation knows not of soft words and flattery. "Fight!" urges the young worker. "Here one must speak loudly," says Aisman's Jewish revolutionist, "with force! We must with full voice, so that we make them tremble. But if you are soft—mya—mya—mya—then by God, chuck it all..."

Life is advancing. By degrees the fathers come to understand their children, come to feel with them. And just as Pavel Vlasov's mother, the Russian peasant woman in Gorky's novel *Mother*, comes to understand her son Pavel and comes to love the Revolution, so do the Jewish fathers bless the martyrdom of their sons. And when the young son in Yushkevich's affecting story "Eli," is caught in the vortex of Revolution, the father Favel, a good, pious, dreamy laborer, says: "He is right...He is right..." To this the distracted mother, the lame

Esther, exclaims: "But who will return to me my little son? Who? I would not give one little hair from his head for all the blessings of the world. There, the One who is above looks down upon us. Ask Him, what would He say to a mother?" And Favel answers: "He would say, Surrender him. I vow. What is the heart of one mother before the suffering of all mothers? What are her tears?"

And another father, in Aisman's story "Spring Freshets," cannot follow the intricate arguments between his Zionist daughter and his terrorist son, but somehow he feels that a deep truth is hidden in their words: "I don't know who is right, Yakov or Sonia, but let them go, let them go!..."

Indeed, in the words of An-nsky: "The young folks were moved neither by entreaties nor by threats, they firmly followed their path. And people grew used to it! ... The elders began to regard searches, arrests, and exiles with decreasing horror. Finally, the Suburb came to see that the stormy youths who emerged from its depths did not abandon it, did not fall upon it with the greed and brazenness of an enemy's force ... The Suburb realized that the young folk, in fact, stepped out in its defense. And having become convinced of this, the Suburb drew nearer to the new force, bringing its great sorrow and want, its pains and misery. And the Suburb, wasted and afflicted, recognized the power of its children, began to be proud of them, respect their words, be happy with their joys, despair at their misfortunes. Gradually it began to be permeated with a deep faith in a radiant future..."

Thus it was that by the side of the many remnants of medieval traditions and customs, by the side of the kheders and yeshivas, of the Rabbis and the Zadiks, there arose within the Ghetto a group of young Jews,

proud and defiant, strong and self-assertive. Still few in numbers, it was they who constituted the active, dynamic element of the Ghetto. It was they who bravely carried the banner of a radiant future on their shoulders. Over three decades of government-inspired Jew-baiting, pogroms, and persecution, which finally culminated in the infamous Mendel Bailis ritual murder trial, only added fuel to the ominous flames of the rising revolution. The Ghetto, the youth of the Ghetto, was in arms.

Pity and Sympathy

1. *Proletarian Orientation.* The sinister flames of 1881 illumined and exhibited to the view of a horrified world the writhing mass of starved humanity within the Pale. The legends of the "advancing Jew" and of the "Jewish Empire" were forgotten in the moans and cries of a nation in flight. It dawned upon an astounded world that it certainly was not owing to comfort and riches that some millions of Jews had fled to foreign lands, and that many thousands more had gone to the gallows, to prisons, and to Siberia. Moreover, as we have pointed out, during these decades the Jew had become much more articulate and had revealed the most hidden recesses of his soul in the faithful mirror of his own art and literature. All this could not but affect the Russian author's conception of the Jew.

As if with a magic wand, the pogroms of 1881 eliminate the Jewish parvenu capitalist from Russian literature. He disappears never to rise again. The scene is shifted, the mirror turned, the atmosphere changed, and instead of the bloated financier, the little, pale, timid, poor, honest, and good-natured Jew, a bit comical, but lovable withal, makes his soul-rending appearance. One sentiment gives way to another. Old patterns give way to new ones. We have seen the beginning of this change of

attitude in our study of Saltykov Shchedrin. Shelgunov, Mordovtsev, Staniukovich, and a few others write articles in justification of the Jew. A little later the famous Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev joins the chorus. The poverty and degradation in which the Jew lives, the bloody massacres and the legal whip held over the heads of Russian Jewry, strike pity and shame into the hearts of the more decent and humane elements of Russian society—the liberal and revolutionary intelligentsia. Furthermore, it is at this time that the proletariat is beginning to consolidate into a distinct social class, with a distinct social philosophy. The working class is becoming aggressive and self-assertive. Bourgeois Nationalism and peasant Populism are beginning to recede to the background as progressive social factors. Marxism, Socialism, and Internationalism are invading the stage. Also, the class composition of the literary body and the reading public is undergoing radical changes. The newly arrived petty-bourgeois and proletarian elements are commencing to speak in unmistakable terms, and the commoner in literature is evincing more and more of a proletarian slant. Naturally, these changes in the social-economic conditions, together with the accompanying changes in ideology and authorship, are reflected in the literary and journalistic writings of the period (1880-1917). We have seen how up to the Sixties aristocratic domination of Russian letters resulted in a uniformly contemptuous attitude toward the Jew; we have seen how bourgeois and peasant ascendancy expressed itself in bitter hatred for the Jewish capitalist; we now see how a growing proletarian orientation expresses itself in an ever greater sympathy for the Jewish masses.

That the changing sentiment of writers should reflect the changing condition in the economic and social life of the nation, was natural and normal. The amazing thing

is that, despite the many static forces in society, the numerous conventions, prejudices and superstitions, Russian literature, in its treatment of the Jew, reveals fewer traces of those forces than one would naturally expect. What is most amazing, however, is the incredible suddenness with which one sentiment gives way to another, one Jewish stencil to the next. Even if one grants that economic changes in Russia have caused new social elements to enter the writing profession, and that each distinctive social group has had its own ideology, its peculiar way of seeing things; even if one grants that each new change in the composition of the literary group was bound to be reflected in a changed sentiment toward the Jew, and in a different depiction of him; one nevertheless is bound to wonder why it is that in this case, particularly in the last two periods, the influence of the static forces has been so feeble, the traces of emotional "hang-overs" so faint, the changes in sentiment so sudden, the appearance of new Jewish types so abrupt, the coordination between social-economic changes and emotional fluctuations so perfect.

This would indeed be difficult to explain were it not for the unique rôle that literature had played in Tsarist Russia. Russian genius, unless it agreed to serve as flunkey to the corrupt, bureaucratic, reactionary regime of the Romanovs, had no other avenue for effective expression except the arts, particularly literature. This was the only means through which an honest Russian thinker could hope to become a potent, progressive force in life. The votaries of the literary art were usually the best, the most responsive, the most socially-minded of the Russians. These writers were always with their ears near the ground, always on the alert, always ready to register and react to the slightest fluctuations in their environment. Except for a few in the early period, they have

always manifested a decided tendency to view their art in the light of social utility. This circumstance accounts for the immediacy with which social phenomena were reflected in literature. This also accounts for the rarity of emotional atavism. The intelligentsia, on the whole, was too alive to the present, too highly sensitized to immediate social stimuli, to be seriously swayed by emotional survivals.

The attitudes of the intelligentsia were not at all representative of the Russian masses. The former never did and never could articulate for the latter. Ever since the Eighteenth century there has been an ever-widening chasm between the peasant masses and the cultivated Europeanized intellectuals. All attempts to bridge it have proved futile. The slow-witted peasant, vegetating in a slowly changing village milieu, retained innumerable ancient prejudices and superstitions concerning the Jew. Had the peasant been literary, there would have been utter confusion of old and new sentiments—and our task would have been infinitely more difficult. It happens, however, that the case of the Jew in Russian literature offers wellnigh laboratory conditions under which to carry on our observations: an isolated Ghetto element—the Jew—reacted to by another isolated, homogeneous, and highly active element—the Russian intelligentsia. Changes in atmospheric pressure, electrical conditions, temperature, etc., affect both elements involved and produce changes in the reaction. This extraordinary circumstance accounts for the thoroughness with which the old stencil of the Jewish upstart is discarded, and a new stencil of the little Jew is adopted.

Unfortunately, in their endeavor to be fair, the Russian liberal authors, as well as the great contingent of revolutionary and Marxist authors, leaned too much one way. They became nauseatingly sweet; they exaggerated

the Jew's virtues; they minimized or overlooked his faults. Their approach was intellectual; in their art they waxed sentimental when they portrayed the Jew, but their emotions were not sufficiently powerful to be transmuted into artistic images. Others were excessively self-conscious, the injustice of their country weighed too heavily on their shoulders—this had a paralyzing effect on their creativeness when they approached a Jewish theme. That is why many great Russian writers avoided the subject of the Jew in their art altogether. They expressed themselves on the Jewish question in journalistic articles; they could not crystallize their perplexed emotions on this subject into real art.

2. *A. P. Chekhov.* (1860-1904). In conception and artistic treatment of the Jew, Chekhov serves as a link between the Seventies and the Eighties. Transition products, his Jewish stories betray traces of conflicting emotions. Arranged chronologically, however, they reveal a steady metamorphosis from hatred and contempt toward pity and sympathy. The types he depicts are also transitional—most of them are converts and belong to the assimilationists of the Sixties and Seventies. But here, too, the unfolding nature of Chekhov's treatment of this subject is palpable. From the vulgar parvenu (Tina) whom he detests, from the comical professionals whom he despises, he passes to the "maskil" assimilator whom he pities, and the poor and good Jew in "Rothschild's Fiddle" whom he sincerely likes. Because of his humorous tendencies, though, our author is at all times prone to accentuate the ludicrous side of the Jew.

In this connection, Chekhov's notebook is suggestive and of interest; it contains the following tell-tale memoranda: "A Jewish surname—Perchik" (little pepper); "A Jewish surname—Chepchik" (night-cap); "A Jew, Tzipchik" (suggestive of a chick). Nor are Jewish la-

dies ignored: "Rosalia Osipovna Aromat" (Aroma) and "Madame Gnusik" (snuffle). Thus the author's selective perception distilled the Jewish essence first, i. e., comicality; comicality associated with pettiness, timidity, and odoriferousness. In "Rothschild's Fiddle" Yakov calls the Jew "Garlic;" but Yakov is a crude peasant; Chekhov is devastatingly subtle—he calls him "Aromat," aroma!

In "The Steppe" we read that Moisey Moiseyevich, the innkeeper, was "wriggling, gesticulating, shrugging, and uttering joyful exclamations," he "squealed, cried in horror, flinging up his hands," he "bent his head on one side, crooked his knees; and put his open hands before him as though warding off a blow, while with a smile of agonized sweetness, he began..." He went off into "shrill laughter, like the yap of a lap-dog..." "to show his appreciation of his guest's humor he laughed two notes higher [than his guest] and so violently that he could hardly stand on his feet." Moisey's brother, Solomon, was "comical... in the extreme, because the more impressive his attitude, the more vividly it showed up his short trousers, his bobtail coat, his caricature of a nose, and his bird-like, plucked-looking little figure."

In these descriptions we recognize the ghosts of Zhid Yankel and Isay Fomich. Verily, the evil that men do lives after them. While Gogol and Dostoievsky lie mouldering in their graves, the "plucked chicken" image is ever marching onward—it bobbed up in Shchedrin, it comes up in Chulkov, it peeps out here—slightly modified, to be sure, for here the Jew is a "bird-like, plucked-looking little figure."

Furthermore, the Yiddish language does not sound very musical to Chekhov. He says:

"Moisey Moiseyevich spoke in a low bass undertone, and altogether his talk in Yiddish was like a continual

'ghaal-ghaal-ghaal-ghaal . . .' while his wife answered him in a shrill voice like a turkey-cock's and the whole effect of her talk was something like 'too-too-too-too!'. . ."

"Ghaal-Ghaal-ghaal-ghaal!" said Moisey Moiseyevich.

"Too-too-too-too!" answered the Jewess.

The author, like many of his forerunners, pokes fun at Jewish fecundity:

"The greasy quilt quivered, and from beneath it appeared a child's curly head on a very thin neck . . . another little curly head on a thin neck peeped out of the greasy quilt, then a third, then a fourth . . . If Yegoroushka had had a fertile imagination he might have imagined that the hundred-headed hydra was hiding under the quilt."

Humorous touches are not missing in the lineaments of other Jews: Now we are presented to a "blackish, surly, little pharmacist," who "bears such a serious and wise countenance that it is simply awful;" now we are amused by another little druggist, who "snores sweetly," while "a greedy flea had sucked into the bridge of his nose," but who does not feel it, "he even smiles, for he is dreaming that everybody in town is coughing and incessantly buying of him 'drops of the Danish King. . .'" or, again, we are made to laugh at the peculiarities of the baptized dentist Finkel, upon whose head the "most charming Vanda," a Russian semi-professional prostitute, "had once in the German club, at the dinner table, poured a glass of beer," and who, "puffing like a machine," pulls out Vanda's healthy tooth, and nonchalantly demands his regular fee. There are many more delightful little touches, but we shall let the reader seek them for himself, while we shall proceed to examine the more unique and original aspects of Chekhov's treatment of the Jew.

Since so many of Chekhov's Jews are baptized, his opinion concerning converts, as expressed in his notebook, are of interest.

'The ease [sic] with which Jews change their 'religion,'" he writes, "is justified by many on the ground of indifference. But this is not a justification. One has to respect even one's indifference, and not change it for anything, since indifference in a decent man is also a religion." There is nothing that this delicate, sensitive author hates quite so much as indecency.

Thus Finkel is a disgustingly indecent individual, and Chekhov points out that he is a convert. Susanna Moiseyevna says: "I am very often in church! We all have one God. For cultured persons the externalities are not so important as the idea... Isn't it so?" And throughout the story Chekhov emphasizes her parvenu lack of taste and refinement. She is shamelessly greedy and corrupt. She is licentious and a swindler. She, too, is indecent!

To the decent Jew Chekhov introduces us in another story. Solomon, in "The Steppe," is indifferent, but he is not baptized, for he is decent, and "indifference in a decent man is also a religion."

Solomon has apparently been affected by some of the heretical populist doctrines that were afloat in Russia in the Seventies. He is indifferent to the Jewish as well as to the Christian religion. He realizes that money is the actual God in the modern world. People cringe and fawn before Gold. Speaking to the visitors before whom his brother had been obsequious, Solomon blurts out in defiance:

"What am I doing? The same as everybody else...You see, I am a menial, I am my brother's servant; my brother is the servant of the visitors; the visitors are Varlamov's servants; and if I had ten millions, Varlamov would be my servant...There isn't a gentleman or millionaire who isn't ready to lick the hand of a scabby Jew for the sake of making a kopeck...Though Varlamov is

a Russian, he is at heart a scabby Jew; money and gain are all he lives for, but I threw my money in the stove! I don't want money, or land, or sheep, and there is no need for people to be afraid of me and to take off their hats when I pass. So I am wiser than your Varlamov and more like a man.'"

New times, new songs! Indeed who would have thought before of making a Jewish character throw six thousand rubles in the fire in order to assert his ideal of human dignity? Solomon, with his provoking lack of civility, his vulgar combativeness, denunciatory harangues, intense, and, to Chekhov's mild nature, slightly unsympathetic idealism, is a new type of Jew in Russian literature. His entire point of view is strange and incomprehensible to the lovable, innocent, credulous and pious orthodox priest, Father Christopher:

"Stop!" he shouts, "If you don't like your religion you had better change it, but to laugh at it is a sin; it is only the lowest of the low who will make fun of his religion."

"You don't understand," Solomon cut him short rudely, "I am talking of one thing and you are talking of something else..."

The Christian priest did not understand, nor did Solomon's Jewish brother understand. To both he seemed either a fool or an imbecile. "He does not sleep at night, and is always thinking, and thinking, and thinking, and what he is thinking about God only knows," his brother complains.

It was this peculiar Jew that was "thinking, and thinking, and thinking," who finally broke away from the fetters of Jewish religion and social traditions, who joined the ranks of the organized proletariat, and who in the Nineties became active in the "Arbeiter Bund," the Jewish branch of the Social-Democratic party of Russia. He abandoned the Jewish religion, for it shackled his free

spirit, but he did not adopt the faith of his neighbors, because among them, just as among the Jews, he saw the unscrupulous, the greedy, the cruel gain power and riches, gain social and political ascendance together with their economic advantages. Solomon was "thinking, and thinking," and the results were a furious, religiously fanatical indifference to religion, and a lofty ideal of Man and Man's dignity.

Utterly different is the baptized Jew Alexander Ivanovich, formerly Isaac, the hero of the story "Uprooted." This young man of two and twenty, with his "round and pleasing face," and "dark, child-like eyes," this half-baked intellectual who, lured by the splendor and glory of modernity, forsook the narrow haven of the Ghetto, to be finally crushed into timidity and futility, this lovely soul who was afraid of solitude and of his own perplexed conscience, this poor moth who was drawn irrestibly to the light to be hopelessly and irretrievably singed, this Jew who did not have the decency to respect his own indifference and who, regarding conversion as the road to enlightment and progress, found himself a pauper and a parasite—leaves one with a feeling of ineffable sadness.

Tragic as Solomon's fate was, harsh, austere, and unsympathetic as he was himself, he at least found a firm basis for his doctrines. To him the class struggle proved a much more tangible and a more grateful object of his loyalties than vapid theological and racial controversies. This was probably one of the reasons why so many young Jews, abandoning the ancient mores and scholasticism of the Ghetto, flocked into the working-class movement, where they found an outlet for their newly-awakened energies, where together with their Christian comrades they could dream of and fight for a better and more humanized world. Here they could swim in the broad cur-

rents of modern life without losing their decency and their "respect for their religious indifference." Solomon and Alexander Ivanovich both are types in embryo of the young Jewish rebel. One went along the highways of Western progress, the other vanished in the mystical twilight of a Greek Orthodox monastery. Of course, Alexander Ivanovich found neither light nor happiness. "The tone of his voice betrayed that he was conscious of his abnormal position and regretted it. He seemed, as it were, apologizing and justifying himself."

In Chekhov, whom we have seen in his notes condemning easy conversion, this pitiful, shambling, meek convert stirs melancholy feelings. Now that he sees the soul of the convert, he does not condemn, he pities—

"Not more than a yard from me lay a homeless wanderer; in the rooms of the hostess and by the carts in the courtyard among the pilgrims some hundreds of such homeless wanderers were waiting for the morning, and further away, if one could picture to oneself the whole of Russia, a vast multitude of such uprooted creatures was pacing at that moment along high-roads and side-tracks, seeking something better, or waiting for the dawn, asleep in way-side inns and little taverns, or on the grass under the open skies... As I fell asleep I imagined how amazed and perhaps even overjoyed all these people would have been if reasoning and words could be found to prove to them that their life was as little in need of justification as any other."

The great artist finally came to feel that the wretched convert's life "was as little in need of justification as any other."

Anna, née Sarah Abramson (*Ivanov*), is another convert. Ivanov, her Christian husband, characterizes her in the following words: "Anna is a splendid, an exceptional woman. She has left her faith, her parents, and her for-

tune for my sake. If I should demand a hundred other sacrifices, she would consent to every one without the quiver of an eyelid."

Despite his eulogy of Anna, and Anna's great love for him, Ivanov, a decent and well-bred gentleman, in anger, hurls at her the word, "Zhidovka." What a terrible warning Anna's fate is to those who would trip lightly into mixed marriages. Anna's well-nigh saintly character, her selfless love, did not shield her from having her Jewish origin thrown up as accusation and insult by the very man whom she adored!

Other images of Jews flit through Chekhov's works. The good, old-fashioned, untidy wife of Moisey Moiseyevich leaves a warm glow behind her. She is sympathetic and motherly. There is a touch of lyrical loveliness in her solicitude for the home-sick Christian urchin. The universal spirit of motherhood triumphs over petty and relatively ephemeral race prejudice. Besides, with a pang in her heart she recalls that in about a year her own little "delicate" fledgling, Nakhum, will also leave his mother's nest and fly away to distant cities to study. A flood of affection and sympathy radiates from this "big, fat Jewess."

The "red-haired, emaciated Rothschild" comes to one's memory. In retrospect everything extrinsic and superficial is cast aside—his comicalness, his cockiness, his timidity; we remember him only with arms crossed on his chest, listening to Yakov, his persecutor, playing his own swan song.

"The scared wandering look on his (Rothschild's) face was gradually giving place to an expression of sadness and suffering, he turned up his eyes in a paroxysm of painful ecstasy, as it were, and uttered: "Vakh-kh-kh!" Tears trickled slowly down his cheeks and dropped on his green coat."

In the realm of the beautiful, of art, a Christian and a Jewish soul had met, and a chord struck by one stirred a sympathetic vibration in the other. In the realm of the truly beautiful, mundane hatreds, prejudices, and jealousies dissolve and vanish—and Chekhov's art is proof of that.

Indeed, in Chekhov we see how great artistic intuition, aided by changes in objective conditions, has ultimately triumphed over a deep-set predisposition to make sport of the Jew. A broader outlook and a deeper insight are observable in all of Chekhov's later works, the same qualities are also observable in his later treatment of the Jewish subject. Still, we emphasize—Chekhov's subsequent sympathetic treatment of the Jew as manifested in "Rothschild's Fiddle" was not due solely to his artistic intuition, to his broadening outlook, and his deepening insight; it was also, and perhaps chiefly, due to the changes in economic and social conditions. As we have already pointed out, since the Eighties sympathy for the Jew was the literary vogue, and Chekhov's "Rothschild's Fiddle" was only one of the many stories written at this period that brought about the crystallization of the type of the good little Jew in Russian literature.

From now on we behold a host of Ghetto images—pale sufferers, poor proletarians, puny heroes—pass before us. Now the little Jew is a student (Machtet); now a tailor, or a jeweller (Potapenko); now a fruit peddler, or an itinerant actor (Uspensky, Gorky, Kuprin); now a timid little sailor (Stanjukovich); now a dwarfish, helpless hunchback (Chulkov); now a cobbler, or a coachman, or a serving-man, or some other species of menial worker. On the whole, the patterns used are so uniformly alike that it matters little whether, in our discussion of them, we follow chronological sequence or not. Still,

but for a few cases dictated by exigencies of composition, we shall try to adhere to a definite chronological order.

3. *Ghetto Images. G. A. Machtet.* (1852-1901.) Machtet's famous story, "The Jew" (1887) was among the first to inaugurate the reign of pity for the Jew in Russian literature. Here we are given a sympathetic depiction of a Jewish student, the good little David Gurveis.

David, the son of a poor tailor, is a student in the gymnasium. He is touchingly comical and untidy, but an excellent student and a self-abnegating friend. We later see him in the university, in the medical faculty, still a bit queer, yet thoroughly Russianized, and a lover of the Russian people and its literature. In spite of all this, he does not shun his own people; he is a Jew, and is proud of his Jewish antecedents. He is one of the first to bring cultural rejuvenescence into the Ghetto. His progress is the inspiration of many other Jewish youths. When the Russo-Turkish war breaks out, he joins the medical corps, and renders heroic services on the battlefields.

The story is full of humorous incidents, and illuminating discussions of the Jewish question. Of course it was written with a liberal purpose, was motivated by pity, and was in parts extremely sentimental. But even in these, Machtet was more or less original, and since he had written the story in 1887, he cannot be accused of having used a threadbare pattern. He at least was one of the first to have introduced the epithets "good-natured," "calm," "fine," "honest," "unsophisticated to the point of naiveté," "heroic," "modest," etc., in depicting the Jew. He was the first to give literary expression to the tragedy, the poignant dualism, that the Jewish student experienced in his Russian environment. Here is what he says:

"David Gurweis was the personification of a peripa-

tetic living antithesis, if one may use the expression... Having been brought up, like all of us, on the best, immortal creations of our literature; having been molded by the great spiritual fathers of our thought and word, Gogol, Pushkin, Bielinsky, Lermontov, Dobrolubov, Nekrasov, etc.; having been taught by them to comprehend and to love—he was naturally, in spirit, as much a 'Russian,' as much a lover of the Russian people, as all of us were, and perhaps even more so, and, at any rate, less selfishly so than many of us. Yet to the people, the passionately and ideally loved people, for which he suffered, and toward which he was drawn with his whole soul, with his whole pure heart, he was a mere 'Zhid,' a creature hated, suspected, ridiculous in his appearance, pronunciation, and gesticulation—in everything which in one way or another betrayed his racial peculiarities."

Machtet, like Saltykov, Uspensky, etc., is impatient with the myth of the Jew-exploiter, he makes David explode that whole notion by putting the following passionate diatribe in his mouth: "It is an untruth, an abysmal lie!" he shouted, all crimson. "The overwhelming majority of Jews are craftsmen, people of most genuine toil who live in crying need... Have you seen the poverty, the filth, and the wretched surroundings, have you seen how the Jewish craftsman lives, and on what he is nurtured?—No, well, then be silent! And this toiler, this pauper gives his life that he may bring to his children light and knowledge... Do not cast the sins of a few, the sins of a small clique, on all of us... The Jewish exploiter sucks by the penny, the Russian by the ruble."

Not only is the Jew not exclusively and predominantly an exploiter, he on the contrary is an important cultural factor. David expostulates: "We Jews are the only people in the modern world innocent of war and bloodshed. ...Instead of the sword, the long forgotten sword, we

have taken to culture. Instead of Napoleons, we have Lassalles, Marxes, Heines, Börnes, and Meyerbeers!"...

Machtet was one of the very first to treat the Jew sympahetically; this, rather than the artistic merits of the story, accounts for its great popularity among the Jews. It even was translated into Yiddish. In the gloom of Russian reaction an appreciative and encouraging smile from a Christian meant a great deal to the Jews; they were grateful. Judged purely as a work of art, "The Jew" is by no means a great story. The element of maudlin pity vitiates its artistic worth.

4. *I. N. Potapenko* (1856). Potapenko, too, is in accord with the literary tendencies. In his stories "Ampir," "Itsak-Shmul the Jeweller," the "Mishures," we are presented to a number of Jewish characters. We are confronted with sordid poverty; humble, scared, humiliated Jews, all engaged in a frightful scramble for survival.

Notwithstanding the ugly reality about them, Potapenko's Jews retain an idealism, a longing for a remote and beautiful world, for a colorful, happy life.

In the "Mishures" we are introduced to the type of the Jewish servant. We see three of them loiter about the lobby of a provincial hotel, waiting for the opportunity to render petty services, of delicate and indelicate nature, to the guests. The three of them are driven by hunger; competition is keen. In this intense struggle, the fitter, that is, the less sensitive, the more aggressive, the more practical, survives. "At best it is a dog's life," one of the servants complains. "Is it right, then, that in order to keep up one's daily hand-to-mouth existence, one has to become a horse, a donkey, a dog, a cat, even a nightingale, and at times one must become even what one hesitates to mention? No, it is not right. A man should be a man, and not all sorts of trash."

In a life where one has to function as donkey, nightingale, procurer, etc., the unfortunate brooding Borukh is a hopeless misfit. Though the other servants commiserate, they cannot help him. Here is how one of them speaks of Borukh: "He is a peculiar man, this Borukh! He has lived in the world, one would think, long enough for him to be wise, but he is still a fool. That's why he has such hard luck. And he, instead of trying, dreams away, that is, he worries not over what is and what is possible, but over what isn't and what will never be."

Instead of the omniscient, omnipresent and omnivorous Jew, we see a gentle, helpless, dreaming soul, lost in the morass of Ghetto life. But poverty is heartless; it crushes the best of us. In a moment of desperate need, Borukh carries some gossip to one of Itsek's best clients in an attempt to win over the client's patronage. Almost successful, he finally breaks down under the moral strain. Torn with remorse, he falls before Itsek and weeps: "Itsek, I am the lowest man in the world now. I am the very meanest man," he reiterates, striking himself on the chest..."I am worse than a dog..."

"Itsek-Shmul the Jeweller" is also a dreamer. He is a poet in his profession. Visions of beautiful designs, of delicate forms, of harmonious blendings of colors, haunt his imagination. Out of crass reality, his soul rises into a world of ineffable perfection. He, too, is crushed by the crude materialism and the low tastes of the humdrum people about him.

In "Ampir" we read of the painful predicament of a little tailor who tries to be loyal to two of his lady customers, rivals in the world of the provincial élite. Each wants to know the style of the other's dress. The Jew is torn between and betwixt. There is a mix-up, and the Jew loses both customers.

Potapenko's Jewish stories are quite readable, and are superior to many a Jewish story written by greater and more famous writers.

5. *G. I. Uspensky.* (1840-1896). With his two sketches, "Yudka" and "In the Show-Booth," Uspensky also contributed toward the crystallization of the new type of Jew in Russian literature.

Yudka had never known the care-free joys of childhood. "While Russian children played 'journeys,' i.e., pilgrimages to the monastery (for their parents had been preparing for the last five years to go and thank the Lord for the great blessings he had been showering upon them); Yudka played at turning up garbage piles in search of rags, old soles, bones, for all of these might prove of use."

The little Jew early faced the intricacies of a hostile world and the problems of earning a livelihood in a Christian community. He became a fruit vendor. His commercial career was tortuous and thorny. "Since his early childhood a walk through the city was associated in his mind with unpleasant impressions, because idle people always jeered at him." Now a disgruntled official would release his ire, aroused by domestic tribulations, on the innocent urchin-vendor by pulling the latter's hair and ears for the good and adequate reason that the boy was a "Christkiller." Now a janitor would be stirred out of his stupor and general ennui by setting his dog against the Jew. Now a young coxcomb, to exhibit his wit and joviality before the mildly protesting though admiring ladies, would dip the little Jew's head in the river...In short, Yudka was a godsend.

Foolish Yudka did not understand the complexities of human nature. It all seemed so unreasonable to him. Late in the night, Yudka would come home and, cogitating over the events of the day, could not for anything in

the world answer the simple question as to what he had done to them. He would usually leave the house with the most harmless intention of earning his own bread; he would earn his bread, but together with the bread he would receive wholly undeserved decorations all over his body. "Was it his fault," questions Uspensky, "that some were eaten up with ennui, and others with dire poverty?"

In "The Show-Booth" we see the desolate Jew who dies of sickness and hunger, and in utter loneliness. The story is of very slight literary significance, for it is pervaded with an atmosphere of premeditated sadness and is too palpably didactic.

6. *K. M. Staniukovich.* (1844-1903). Towards the end of the Seventies, even before Saltykov's *Unfinished Conversations*, Staniukovich had come out with a warm tribute to the Jews. He ridiculed the myth of Jewish exploitation and the tendency to make the Jew the scapegoat for all the untoward events that were taking place in Russian life. His story "Isaika" (1898) reflected his sympathetic and humane attitude.

Isaika was a Jew drafted into the navy for a period of twenty-five years. Small, timid, unfit for strenuous labor, Isaika was rather of an intellectual disposition. An ignorant tailor, he soon learned to read and speak the Russian language. His spare time he would devote to books. Among the men, the officers, and their wives, his reputation grew by leaps and bounds; for he was clever, kind, genuinely obliging, and a jack-of-all-trades. He held to his religion and was respected for it. There were occasional jests at his meekness, but these were generally made in a spirit of good fellowship. The story takes place during the reign of Nicholas I, when corporeal punishment in its most cruel and barbarous form was practiced throughout Russia. Isaika would be thrown into fits of despair at the mere thought of such punish-

ment, even when it threatened others. He would rush to his cabin, bury his head in a pillow, and weep.

Among the sailors there was a big, drunken, happy-go-lucky Russian, who, though respecting Isaika's learning and wit, could not help despising a bit his physical inadequacies. Once, in a moment of drunken abandon, this sailor sold his cloak and boots. He was about to receive a terrible flogging, when Isaika, moved by pity, made his way into the city and with his last kopeck redeemed the missing articles. The sailor was spared the terrible humiliation, and Isaika was happy. A tender though undemonstrative friendship was established between the two men. Once, the brute of a new Captain, infuriated by something for which Isaika was not in the least responsible, ordered him to be flogged. Isaika was brought on the deck half-dead; he fell on his knees, muttering: "I can't, I can't . . ." Instead of heeding Isaika's entreaties, the Captain ordered an even heavier punishment. Isaika suddenly flared up, straightened out, stared defiantly at the Captain, called him a mean, heartless, cruel beast, and jumped over the railing into the sea. His friend, the Russian sailor, jumped after him. But Isaika never came up again; he went like a rock to the bottom.

A Jew capable of rising to the heights of noble and heroic indignation was, except for Biblical and romantic Jews, a new type in Russian literature. The Jew in this story is idealized, and yet the diagnosis of "Jewish cowardice" implied in it seems to contain elements of profound psychological truth. Isaika was afflicted with the rich imagination, the morbidly exalted sense of human dignity, the deep aversion for the primitively brutal, characteristic of the intellectual. He preferred death to what he considered the worst degradation—flogging. The wholesome Russians felt differently about flogging; they

accepted it light-heartedly, as a matter of course; they would not be so absurdly sensitive.

7. *Four Minor Writers.* In "Little Raukh," Chulkov elaborates the ever recurring theme of the little Jew—in this case a peddler who had shrunk to the size of a dwarf—and a strong and brutal Russian, a butcher.

The butcher Pronin, during a Jewish pogrom, insulted little Raukh's sister and struck her in the face in her brother's presence. Raukh, a dwarf, was helpless. "A day later the pogrom was over, and early in the morning little Raukh made his appearance in Pronin's shop and admonished in his cracked voice: 'Do me a favor, Mr. Yakov Pronin, go to my sister and tell her, Pardon me, Miss Raukh, since I was very drunk yesterday.'" Pronin roared with laughter at the hunch-backed dwarf; everybody laughed. "Mr. Yakov Pronin," said Raukh in the same cracked voice, "if you don't apologize before my sister Revekka, I will go and kill myself." Everybody laughed still louder. Raukh shot himself. "Dear Revekka . . . Poor Revekka . . ." said Raukh, pulling a rusty pistol from his bosom; "my dear little sister," he whispered for the last time with lips that were growing pale . . .

The pale image of the hunchback Raukh haunts the butcher. Pronin goes mad with fear and remorse. Little Raukh's extraordinary way of avenging his sister's pain is certainly devilishly effective.

Melshin-Yakubovich in his "The Mare on the Road" (1896) presents a little Jew, a timid and debased convict, who, when his children are threatened, rises to tragic heights of indignation and defiance. In his "In the World of the Rejected" he gives us, in the style of Machtet, a very sympathetic account of a Jewish physician.

Garin-Mikhailovsky in "Itska and Davidka" (1892) portrays the poverty of the Jewish worker. The same story brings into relief Jewish honesty and capacity

for true friendship. Both Itska and Davidka, for all their comicality, are pitiful, frightened, and lovable types. "The Old Jew" (1901) tells of the sadly paradoxical situation of a Jew who, after having acquired land and property in Siberia, whither he had been exiled, loses the right to live on his own land when his rights of freeman are restored to him. The Jew is abandoned and lonely. One of his children is abroad, the other in Siberia. In "The Genius" (1901) the story is told of an old orthodox Jew who discovered differential calculus two hundred years after Newton. The crushing shock the Jew received on learning of his illustrious predecessor, also the obscure death of this wasted genius, are described in dark colors. Many friendly references to Jews are to be found in most of the works of this writer.

Yablonovsky in "Nukhim" draws the silhouette of a Jewish agriculturist from the Ukraine. Nukhim does not differ much from his Ghetto coreligionists, he is quite as timid, and as obliging. A good soul, he is taken advantage of by the lazy, care-free Little Russian squire, his neighbor. There is also sympathetic mention of a Jewish gymnasium student and an indigent Jewish provincial journalist in Yablonovsky's delightful narrative dealing with Russian student life.

8. *The Shield.* From the study of the "Pity" period thus far, the reader has been struck, no doubt, by the complete absence of the Jewish capitalist. As a reaction against the hatred of the preceding epoch, as a counterfoil to the much exploited "parvenu Jew," we now have pity, and the even more exploited type of the poor, dreamy Jew. This sentiment and its corresponding type are, with very few exceptions, characteristic of the whole period up to the 1917 Revolution; they reach an unprecedented development during the Great War. This final outburst of pity was again a reaction against the

growing anti-Semitism in official circles and among a certain group of erstwhile liberal and socialist intellectuals. Besides, the unspeakable suffering of the Jewish masses who lived on the periphery of the Empire and who were thus most exposed to the ravages of the Austrian and German armies, had much to do with the growth of this sentiment among the host of Russian authors.

For the sake of unity of treatment, we have again decided to do slight violence to chronological sequence. Before taking up the revolutionist and Zionist Jews, who are feebly represented in a few works which appeared before 1914, we will first examine the galaxy of writers who contributed to the *Shield* (an anthology published in 1916 and dedicated to the Jewish question). This general study will be followed by a closer study of a few individual authors, who, by their literary commissions as well as omissions, have shed great light upon the enigmas involved in this very subtle psychological relation of the Russian author to the Jew.

The *Shield,* published in 1916, was edited by Gorky, Andreev, and Sologub. It contains numerous studies, essays, stories, and poems on the Jew. The contributors are for the most part world famous Russian men-of-letters, economists, historians, and statesmen of non-Jewish birth. Here we have the noted historian Professor Paul Milyukov, the well-known Russian economist Bernatsky, the great sociologist and political thinker Kovalevsky, the journalist Kuskova, the philosophers Bulgakov and Vladimir Soloviev, the critic Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky, etc. There is also a formidable array of literary luminaries. Besides the celebrated editors, Gorky, Andreev, and Sologub, we have Artsibashev, Balmont, Bruysov, Bunin, Hippius, Gusev-Orenburgsky, Viacheslav Ivanov, Korolenko, Merezhkovsky, Teffi, Alexei Tolstoy, Shchepkina-Kupernik, and Fiodorov.

With the publicistic articles we are not concerned here. Suffice it to say that all of them deal with Jewish suffering during the war—paradoxical situations are uncovered, iniquities exposed, examples adduced. Now we hear of a wounded Jewish war hero, who on recovery must hasten back to the Pale, for he is not allowed, as a Jew, to be in Central Russia. There we read of parents unable to visit their wounded sons in the hospitals located in the interior of Russia. In another place we are introduced to whole Jewish communities impoverished, ruined, and driven from one place to another. In still another place we read of restrictions imposed by the Government on the education of Jewish children. The effect is cumulative. One is in the throes of an horrible nightmare.

The literary contributions to the volume are numerous, but of inferior quality. We shall have occasion to discuss Gorky's "The Little Boy" and Artsibashev's "The Jew." We shall see how preceptive, sentimental, and inartistic they are. The same weakness and futility are discernible in most of the other stories and poems of the pity period.

Balmont the worshipper of fire, the pagan, the Nietzschean, all of a sudden discovers that

> There is no Hellene, there is no Hebrew,
> There is the star of Bethlehem.

He finds something symbolically significant in the fact that the Son of God, when He had decided to make His appearance among men, was incarnated in a Jew.

Bunin contributes five Biblical poems. In one, "The Torah," he announces to the world the news that the Torah of Christianity was lit from the Torah of Judaism, and that therefore, the implication is, the Jew must be respected. He prophetically announces in another poem that out of the wilderness the Jew will once more be led by Jehovah back to the promised land.

Z. Hippius, again, and independently, discovers that "Christ, He who was to humanity a Tsar, a brother, and a teacher, He, too, was a Jew."

Shchepkina-Kupernik writes a poem "To a Jewess." In the beautiful face of the Jewess she always sees the haunting reflection of the "horror of rightlessness," the "horror of hunger," the "sport of murderers," the "blood of innocent children," and "outraged women." And Shchepkina wants to weep. She throws her arms up to heaven; she chides God for his silence. She prays that the promised day may come, that the shadows of evil may disappear, and that the "light of a new freedom and life" may soon be thrown around "the unfortunate people."

Fiodorov, in his poem "From the Prophet," heralds the coming of a new life of harmony and beauty.

Tikhoberezhsky, in the poem "The Death of a Rabbi," tells how a Rabbi, at the request of a dying Christian soldier, puts a cross to the soldier's lips, and how a German bullet kills the Rabbi and the soldier.

The prose stories and sketches are all in the same vein. They either deplore the suffering of the Jew, or they idealize him, or they apologize for him.

Here is Bryusov, the demoniacal, amoral decadent, waxing sentimental about two Jewish soldiers, brothers separated by the vicissitudes of the war, who accidentally meet in a Jewish home in Warsaw during the Passover feast.

Here is Sologub, the author of exquisite lyrics and ethereal stories and fairy tales, the singer of evil beauty, of grotesque perversion, the father of the immortal *Little Devil*, the creator of legends, the philosopher of the ironical "yes" and the lyrical "no," writing articles, stories and poems, invoking Christian charity, praising the Jew's devotion to Russia and her cause, demanding the removal of Jewish disability. "Our Russia," he says, "is feared

because of its military strength, loved for the splendid qualities of its population—but it will begin to be respected only when it becomes the home of free people." In a poem addressed "To Our Brothers," Sologub, after presenting a rhymed list of "Teuton Atrocities," assures his Jewish brothers who are left homeless and desolate

> Fear not: into our Russian towns
> We'll welcome our friends with outstretched arms.

In the story "Evening Glow," our author describes a timid, good-natured, honest, and devoted tailor, Teitelbaum, about whom the false rumor was spread that he was a German spy. In the second part of the story, in violation of aesthetic unity, but out of noble sociological considerations, Sologub imports a Jewish girl, a student, who is now acting as war nurse. She comes to her old Russian high-school teacher, hysterical and in tears. She had been insulted by a wounded Russian soldier, who called her "Zhidovka" (i.e., Jewess), who refused to accept food from her, and who finally knocked the plate out of her hand. Sarah hysterically questions her teacher: "But why, how do we deserve all this? Why doesn't anyone stand up for us? We are Russians—surely! We have no fatherland—except Russia! We were born here, and grew up here, we love Russia and everything Russian, we study in Russian schools, we read Russian authors, we wish in everything, in everything to be with you. There are a half million Jews in the Russian army —why, then, are we treated this way?"

Teffi satirizes a patriotic Russian lady who prepared for the reception at the military hospital of a wounded hero, a cavalier of the order of St. George. The preparations were elaborate, and painstaking. Now, imagine the dismay of the patriotic lady when she discovers that the much expected Cavalier of the Order of St. George is a Jew, a little Jew from Mogilev, Yossel Shnippes. A Jew

and a Hero?—impossible. Two irreconcilable concepts. The patriotic lady is simply outraged. " 'How awful it is! Doctor! How terrible it is!' she says plaintively. 'But imagine, this soldier is made up of two natures. Just imagine! We have given cigarettes to a Cavalier of St. George, and they are smoked by a Jew! We made a bed of honor for a Cavalier of St. George, and a Jew spread himself out on it!' She sank into the chair, covered her face with her hands, while her corset began to squeak dolefully."

Teffi's story is well told and quite amusing. But then, of course, it is not so much the story of Yossel, as the story of the lady. The moral purpose is most obvious.

The hope for a better life where love and peace shall reign is expressed in Dobronravov's touching story "Life Creating," where three wounded soldiers, one of whom is a gifted Jewish violinist who has lost four fingers on the battle-fields, are restored to faith by reading the prophets. The Jew Fikhman bursts into tears, while the Russian comrade consoles him: "Don't you cry, my dearest. We alone can do nothing. We can only give our lives... We can only suffer, and think, and search, but all will become clear to us in the last hour, when what I have just read comes to pass." "It will come... It will come! whispered Fikhman with passionate conviction—It will be...Adonoi!...O Adonoi..."

Gusev-Orenburgsky, too, forgetting for a while the woes of the village clergy, is drawn to the theater of war; and there amidst bursting shells, and poison gas; amidst cries, and groans, and curses, the heroic figure of a "little" Jewish soldier in the sanitary corps arouses his wonderment and love. How kind the little Jew is, and how self-sacrificing...Never a question, never a doubt. People suffer, people fall, people bleed, therefore he must be kind and omnipresent, therefore he must bandage, therefore

he must minister to the wants of the wounded, and render first aid under the roaring guns and the whistling bullets.

Here are the last lines of the story: "I do not know how long it lasted, only, when I opened my eyes, I descried in the darkness above me a white cross and somewhere near me someone's familiar face. 'I recognized the little Jew.' He was crouched on his knees, and rubbing my chest and temples, was weeping and muttering to himself: 'Oi—Oi, Lord . . . How painful it is to look on people in torture!' And then he whispered consolingly: 'That's all right, that's all right. . . I have already bandaged you up!'"

The *Shield* contains a few more stories in the same vein.

9. *Confessions and Reticences. M. Gorky* (1868-), *V. Korolenko* (1853-1921), *L. Tolstoy* (1828-1910), *L. Andreev* (1871-1919). The tyrannical power of stereotyped emotions and literary fashions is nowhere so strikingly illustrated as in the well-nigh herd-like uniformity in type and sentiment with which the Russian authors manipulated the Jewish subject. This is particularly true of the period now under consideration. As we have repeatedly suggested, the cause of such uniformity inheres probably in the uniformity of the economic and social influences playing upon different authors of the same epoch. What is more perplexing and more difficult to explain is the drab mediocrity—as revealed by our cursory survey of the twenty-odd authors of the Pity Period—into which some even of the greatest Russian writers have lapsed when they composed on a Jewish theme. Here merely economic interpretation yields no results, and the student is forced to indulge in a bit of psychological dissecting.

Fortunately, the following authors (Gorky, Korolenko,

Tolstoi, Andreev and Artsibashev), by their expressions and reticences, have given us a glimpse into the hidden workings of their souls. Here we find a number of differences within the uniform trend. We find either an intellectually generated sentimentalism which runs counter to an emotional aversion of racial, traditional, or class origin, and which often degenerates into didacticism, insincerity, and sterility; or a morbid self-consciousness brought about by an abnormal situation which results in inhibitions and subterfuges.

Thus, Gorky, in his *Fragments from My Diary,* makes the following confession:

"Thinking about the Jews makes one feel humiliated and discredited. Although personally I do not believe that in the whole course of my life I have ever in any way injured a single person of that amazingly steadfast and persevering nation, nevertheless every time I meet a Jew I am reminded of my racial relationship with the fanatic sect of anti-Semites and of my responsibility for the insane actions of my fellow-countrymen." And further, speaking of anti-Semitic books, he says that they are being written "with an ugly and immoral design: to brand a nation, a whole nation!"

These sentiments expressed by Gorky are typical of most of his literary contemporaries. Indeed, so keen has their sense of "humiliation" and "discredit" and "responsibility" been, that in order to rid themselves of this feeling of "humiliation" and "discredit," in order to ease the burden of this "responsibility," they forgot all demands of artistic measure and began to sentimentalize, eulogize, and idealize the Jew. So determined were they to be innocent of anything "ugly and immoral," that they became too virtuous and moral. Instead of approaching the Jewish subject with the perfect freedom essential to the artist, they tried to counteract the evil effects of offi-

cial houndings and black-hundred agitation by writing sweetly lachrimose stories about the "poor" little, "good" little, "honest" little—but "funny" little—Jew. Verily, the liberal Russian writers of the last three decades have shed more tears over the Jew than the Jew has managed to shed over himself. And that is saying considerable! How many didactic, sermonizing stories have been written about the pale, anemic little Jew! But there is nothing so subversive of artistic verisimilitude as didacticism. The more didactic, the less artistic—this is almost a literary axiom. Yet in their treatment of the Jewish subject, Gorky and his contemporaries—Korolenko, Andreev, Artsibashev, etc.—have not heeded this axiom; the result has been a deluge of flat and sapless Jewish stories, one of the most lifeless of which is Gorky's sketch, "The Little Boy."

This story tells of the hardships of a Jewish youngster. The lad appeared before a group of Christian boys who began to jeer at him: "A Jew boy! Catch the Jew boy!" The boy, however, despite the deep wounds he had on his back, displayed such prowess in performing a series of acrobatic feats that he won the admiration and the envy of his youthful audience. They then made a collection. The author becomes effusive:

"And bravely, as it becomes a hero, he looked in my eyes and went on, speaking like a serious grown-up person:

'You think—I have been doing this for myself? Upon my word—I have not. My father ... there is not a crust of bread in the house, and my father is lying badly hurt. So you see, I have to work hard. And, to make matters worse, we are Jews, and everybody laughs at us. Goodbye.'"

The author's grossly rhetorical conclusion follows:

"Many a time in the darkest days of my life I remem-

bered with gratitude the courage and bravery of the little Jewish boy. And now, in these sorrowful days of suffering and bloody outrages which fall upon the grey head of the ancient nation, the creator of Gods and religion—I think again of the boy."

Gorky himself confesses that "it is hard to tell this little story, it is so simple." Indeed, we are inclined to believe that Gorky has always found it exceedingly difficult to tell a story about Jews. And not because "it is so simple," but rather because his attitude toward the Jew has been too complex.

Gorky, judging by his works and his life, is one of the fairest and most broad-minded of men. A real humanitarian, he has pitched into every battle where human rights and human freedom have been in jeopardy. His voice of sweet reasonableness has always risen above the din and clatter of factional fights. In the case of the Jews, there was no one who protested more eloquently than Gorky against the savage treatment accorded them in Russia. There was no one who paid a more glowing tribute to the Jews than he in his article "Russia and the Jews."

"I believe," he says, "that Jewish wisdom is more all-human and universal than any other, and this, not only because of the powerful humaneness that saturates it, but because of its high estimate of man."

He speaks of the Jews as having "produced so much that is beautiful, wise and necessary for the world," and as being a "people which has rendered and is constantly rendering yeoman service to humanity and our Nation."

In the face of such friendly declarations, it may seem ungenerous to suggest that these represent only one side of Gorky's reaction. There is another side to it. And his story "Kain and Artem" (1898) gives one an inkling as to its probable nature.

Kain was "a little, mobile Jew, with pointed head, jaundiced, lean face; with cheekbones and chin covered with bushes of rough red hair, from which the face peered as out of an old, dilapidated velvet frame." His eyes "would dart from side to side and disseminate smiles—timid, ingratiating, fawning." His figure was "puny, frightened and feeble, and in everything it seemed correctly to represent the body and the soul of a Jew."

Kain could be insulted, injured, and robbed of his wares with impunity. It was good sport to hear the "ai-vai-vai" of the Jew, to hear his tearful exhortation, and to watch his little body shrink under the blows falling on it.

In contrast to Kain we have the portrait of a Russian Apollo. Artem was a "colossal fellow with a head framed in thick wavy black hair. This soft hair fell in fantastic curls upon his forehead, reaching down to his beautiful velvet eye-brows and enormous grey eyes, which were oblong and covered with a strange oily mist. His nose was straight, of antique perfection; his lips red, luscious, and covered with a heavy black mustache; his entire round, clean, tanned face was marvelously regular and handsome, his mist-covered eyes were very becoming, they seemed to complete and explain his beauty. Broad-chested, tall, and graceful, with a smile ever playing on his lips, he was a terror to the men and a joy to the women."

Artem was lazy, dull, and good-natured. He was feared and respected. The men were jealous of his successes. Once a gang waylaid him, beat him, and, being sure that they had killed him, hid his body under a bridge. But Artem had remarkable vitality, he soon regained consciousness and began to groan. As fate would have it, it was Kain who discovered Artem. Owing to Kain's unflagging devotion and great tenderness, Artem recovered. He again made his appearance in the city. Kain's for-

tunes suddenly changed; he became Artem's protégé. No one dared offend Kain for fear of incurring Artem's displeasure.

Still, the unnatural bond could not last long. The friendship between the burly Russian and the little Jew was too incongruous. Artem gradually became conscious of ironical allusions, and humorous hints about his relations to the Jew. Furthermore, grateful as he was, aware as he was of the Jew's spiritual and mental qualities, there was something about the Jew's physical appearance, his diffidence, his canine loyalty, his slavish admiration, that grated on Artem's nerves, and that made him feel uncomfortable. He did not like to be seen in Kain's company, he began to chafe at Kain's presence. This feeling of dissatisfaction finally came to a climax. The dénouement is symbolical.

Kain speaks to Artem with exuberance of the latter's great exploits and of the fear he has put in the hearts of Kain's persecuters. Artem is uneasy, he interrupts:

"Wait!"

"We-el! What do you want to say?" asked Kain tremblingly.

"To say? *It is not so simple.*"

"Well? What is it?"

"A!... you see—let us speak frankly. Straight and—everything!"

"Aha!"

"And I must tell you that I can't, I can't—any more—"

Kain is distraught. Fumblingly, Artem tries to make himself clear.

"For the sympathy you have then showed me, I would pay you. How much? Say the word and get the money. But I cannot pity you. I ain't got it in me. I only made believe—pretended. I thought—I pitied, but it turned out a mere lie. I cannot pity...

"Should I want, I would put you on my shoulders and would carry you through the streets. Let them laugh... But it's no use... We must act according to our own truth. What ain't in the soul, ain't. And I, brother, will tell straight up and down... It is disgusting to me, that you're like that... That's how it is."

Artem did not find it so simple to be frank with himself or with the Jew. His attitude was complex. Intellectually he admired, was grateful, and sympathized with the Jew. Yet deep from his subconscious the realization gradually penetrated his consciousness that the Jew was "disgusting" to him, because he was "like that." He had a deeply seated aversion. A thing he could not help, and tried to struggle against in his own crude and primitive way. That is why Artem found that the telling "was not so simple."

From the point of view of artistic expression, Gorky's treatment of the Jew seems to suggest that, like Artem, and for the same reason, perhaps, he found the handling of that subject *not so simple.* While wandering through the length and breadth of Russia, while fighting in the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat, Gorky must have met a great number of Jews not of the Kain type; yet, is it not strange that out of the many thousands of pages he has published, out of the gallery of hundreds of unique types he has created, "Kain" and the "Little Boy" are practically the only desolate Jews we encounter? And even here, though "Kain and Artem" is a strong story, its strength lies not in its insight into Jewish character, but in the terrible and masterly candor with which the Russian attitude toward the Jew is brought out. For as regards Gorky's portrait of the Jew—of Kain—it is the hackneyed literary stencil of the period. And "The Little Boy" is so hopelessly didactic and sentimental that on reading it one feels like quoting Artem: "But it is no

use . . . We must act according to our own truth. What ain't in the soul, ain't."

Korolenko also knew the Jew, and was one of his most unswerving and vehement defenders. A relentless foe of bigotry, prejudice, injustice, he was indefatigable in his championship of the Jewish cause. But as he himself wrote in "Mr. Jackson's Opinion on the Jewish Question," "Love is capricious. Like mercy, it bloweth whither it listeth . . . But justice, justice is obligatory . . ." Indeed, it was Korolenko's consecration to the cause of justice, we suspect, that forced the Jewish subject upon him. Korolenko the artist was not stimulated by the Jew. Throughout his voluminous writings, we find only two stories dealing with him, "The Atonement Day" and "In a Strange Land." The first is a lustreless, futile, and humorless tale which once more endeavors to establish that a Russian exploiter may be more heartless and ravenous than a Jewish one, and in it figures the old, though in this case slightly fantastic, image of the Jewish publican. The second story is a naïve tale of life in the New World, where a sympathetic but very superficially delineated Jewish family is mentioned.

Would it be ungracious to suggest that in his creative art, Korolenko also felt that the Jewish subject "was not so simple," and that it was no use . . . since in art one must create according to one's own deeper truth . . . and "what ain't in the soul, ain't"?

There is every reason to assume that Tolstoy was so well aware of the above truth that he confined himself only to occasional humanitarian utterances on the Jewish question. He was not foolhardy enough to give artistic expression to his perception of the Jew. Profound psychologist and great artist, he probably discerned that any such attempt would result in failure. A sincere presentation of the Jew as Tolstoy perceived him would not

serve, because of its uncomplimentary nature, any humanitarian ends, on the other hand insincerity in his art was out of the question. Thus did Tolstoy wisely save himself from doing the wrong thing, by steering clear of this subject altogether. Jews are, of course, mentioned here and there throughout his works; they have become an integral part of the Russian panorama and Tolstoy could not help registering this fact, but he registered it cursorily, in passing, his eyes never dwelt on the Jew for more than a fraction of a second. The healthy, contemplative aristocrat, Tolstoy, most likely felt that it was "disgusting" to him that the Jew was "like that" .... Ever worried about something, always darting after a kopeck..."always whimpering over one thing or another." (Words used by Glieb Uspensky in explaining the Russian aversion for the Jew.

This was natural. We must remember that Tolstoy was born in 1828, that he belonged to the generation of Dostoievsky, Turgenev, Dahl, etc., and that, like them, he was a member of the nobility, and a product of educational and environmental influences of that time. In his early works (*"Invasion," "Sevastopol," "War and Peace"*) we constantly encounter the contemptuous name Zhid. In "War and Peace" he mentions some "Austrian Zhids" as purveyors of all kinds of "temptations." These details show that in his early perception of the Jew Tolstoy was in harmony with his age. But Tolstoy lived a long life, well into the modern period. What was natural in the Forties, the Fifties, and the Sixties was rendered out-of-date by the developments of the early Eighties. New attitudes and new patterns have usurped the place of the old ones. In addition to these environmental changes, we must bear in mind that by the Eighties Tolstoy himself had gone through a painful regeneration. As a Christian moralist Tolstoy came to detest all violence,

all oppression, all persecution of one man by another. Morally, therefore, Tolstoy came to sympathize with the Jew who suffered hatred, persecution, pogroms. That much we gather from his humanitarian declarations in favor of the Jew.

But what about his art? Here the situation is quite different. In art, we have seen, one must create according to one's own deeper truth. In matters of art it certainly is always true that "what ain't in the soul...ain't." Deep-set prejudices and ingrained attitudes are not easily shed. Hence—dualism, hence—impotence, hence—evasions.

That Tolstoy steered clear of the Jewish subject because as a moralist he wanted to be innocent of anything "ugly and immoral," and because as an artist he felt sterile and impotent when he tried to depict the Jew, is not mere surmise. We have a bit of startling evidence in the recently published draft of two chapters of *Resurrection.*[11] In these we see that in the year 1900 Tolstoy did try to handle a Jewish subject, that he attempted, in fact, to depict the type of an exiled Jewish revolutionist—Wilhelmson (what a peculiar name for a Jew!), "a firm, clever, and morose *Hebrew*" (no contemptuous Zhid now!). This Wilhelmson is clearly the prototype of the very lovable Simonson in the novel as it was finally published. It is noteworthy, however, that in the novel there is no intimation that Simonson was first conceived as a Jew. This seems to suggest that Tolstoy, too, found the Jewish subject "not so simple," and that he felt impelled to deprive Wilhelmson of his Jewishness before he could sincerely draw a satisfactory and sympathetic portrait of him. Indeed, profound psychologist and great artist, Tolstoy discovered that any attempt on his part to draw the Jew sympathetically would inevitably result in failure.

Like Gorky and the rest of his contemporaries, An-

dreev shows that he, too, has a feeling of "humiliation" and "discredit" whenever he is confronted with the Jew.

"Living together with the Jews as my fellow citizens," he writes, "being in constant personal contact and business relations with them, in the field of concerted social work, I came face to face with the Jewish problem every single day—and every single day of my life I felt with intolerable keenness all the falsehood and wretched ambiguity of my situation, that of an oppressor against one's will. In the doctor's office, at my desk, in the editorial room, in the street, finally in jail, where together with the Jew I fulfilled the all-Russian prison duty—everywhere I remained the privileged 'Russian,' the representative of the sovereign race . . . "

He confesses that in face of the "Jewish question" he feels "powerless and doomed to the most sterile tribulations of spirit."

The question haunts him. "When did the Jewish question leap on my back?" he exclaims. "Wherever I went and whatever I did, the hump was with me; at night it disturbed my sleep, and in my waking hours, when I was among people, it filled me with feelings of confusion and shame."

From Andreev's own words we learn first, that he had known many Jews, secondly, that from the very moment he had assumed "a conscious attitude for life" he never failed to be oppressed by the "ambiguity of his position."

Since Andreev had known many Jews, in the street, in business, in the doctor's office, and in jail, the inevitable question again forces itself upon us, why was it that practically no one living contemporary Jew has found his way into Andreev's art?

We are here obviously faced with a psychological complex. A strained, unwholesome atmosphere of suspicion,

mutual recrimination, guilt, and shame, tended to create in the consciousness of the sensitive Russian liberal a feeling of "ambiguity," of conflict, of dualism. This unnatural psychological condition resulted in inhibitions. In diagnosing Andreev's case, one almost sees the hypothetical Freudian "censor," enthroned in the artist's subconscious, peremptorily striking out any suggestion of a living Jew ere it emerge into the victim's artistic consciousness. A liberal use of the Freudian method may take us even a step farther. The subconscious has a way of circumventing the censor. By resorting to symbols, it smuggles the inhibited subjects, disguised, into the conscious. Prolonged repression was impossible, Andreev had to express himself on the Jewish question. In face of the living Jew he felt "powerless and doomed to the most sterile tribulations of spirit," he therefore resorted to symbols: to Biblical names, to Biblical figures (Eleazar, Judas Iscariot, etc.). Even David Leizer ("Anathema"), though he is placed somewhere in Southern Russia, is not a living contemporary Jew. He too is a Biblical figure, a symbol, "a popular edition of Jesus" (Alexander Kaun).

It may be objected that Andreev used symbols not only in the case of Jews. True, but the Jewish question was not the only subject that harassed him. Furthermore, Andreev was not exclusively a symbolist—he had written many realistic stories and plays, but in practically none of these did any Jew appear, despite the author's "constant personal and business relations with them." Among *The Seven That Were Hanged,* for instance, five revolutionists, a Finnish murderer, and a gypsy murderer, but not one Jew! Among the students, in *The Days of Our Life,* and in *Gaudeamus,* not one Jew! In his numerous short stories, not one Jew! In "To the Stars," to be sure, the accepted stencil of the pale little hysterical Jew

—the astronomer Joseph Abramovich Lunz, does evade the "censor." But Lunz is a sermon, not a living artistic image. All we know about him is that he "gesticulated passionately," that he lost his parents and brothers and sisters in pogroms and on the barricades, and that he was puny of stature. "I, a little Jew . . ." he says as he "walks up and down, gesticulating."

The little gesticulating Joseph Abramovich Lunz is an excellent illustration of the author's impotence in face of a Jewish subject. To conceal that impotence, Andreev, like Gorky, resorts to declamation, to rhetoric, and, like Gorky, oppressed by the "suffering and bloody outrages which fall upon the grey head of the ancient Nation," Andreev also recalls that Israel was "the creator of Gods and religions," and he makes Lunz cry out:

"Again, again! I hear it, how they are shrieking there! You do not, but I hear it! And I see them—all whom they have burned, and murdered, and torn to pieces. They struck us down because *Christ was born amongst us, and there were prophets amongst us.*"

Humiliation and discredit, confusion and shame . . . The hump presses excruciatingly on Andreev's back, he cannot sleep, he pants for breath, he wants to be free, and with Lunz he cries out, "Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs, God of vengeance, appear! Rise, thou Judge of the world, punish the evil-doers as they deserve! Lord God, to whom vengeance belongs, appear! . . ."

And yet, when Andreev, the eternal sceptic, had to express a positive ideal, he embodied it in the symbol of a Jew—his David Leizer is a symbol of the noblest and highest moral precepts reached by the human mind. This is as significant as Andreev's avoidance of the Jew in his realistic works, and his failure in his only attempt at a realistic presentation of a Jew, i. e., the portrait of Joseph Abramovich Lunz. It, no doubt, tends to indicate

that the author was prone to idealize the Jew. Why, then, was this tendency crystallized in remote and allegorical images, in lifeless symbols? We have already suggested a possible answer: in the presence of the real Jew our author, because of his self-consciousness, felt "powerless" and "sterile."

In this connection, a little illuminating incident related by Andreev himself comes to our mind. He tells us that he had once spent a whole night in talking with a very gifted writer, a Jew, who was his "casual and most welcome guest." Anti-Semitism was touched upon. In the Jew's resentment Andreev felt a "dark truth." "I felt," he says, "that my ardent arguments began little by little to sound like false and cheap babbling. So that I did not succeed in convincing him, and when we parted I had not the courage to kiss him: how many unexpected meanings could be disclosed in this plain, every-day token of friendship and affection?"

To kiss seems "so simple," yet it is not always "so simple." In Gorky, and Korolenko, and others we have seen how difficult, how complicated an act it is for a Russian to offer to a Jew a "plain, every-day token of friendship and affection." The whole atmosphere was surcharged with hatred, suspicion, and resentment; simple, open friendship and affection was out of the question.

"Things are altogether bad when even a kiss becomes suspicious and can be susceptible of 'interpretation,' as a complicated act of intricate and enigmatic relations!" complains Andreev. Yes, and how much more this is true of art! how many more unexpected meanings could be read into a story...And just as Andreev for fear of being misinterpreted had not the courage to kiss his Jewish friend, exactly so, and for the same reasons, he had not the courage to use him in his art.

10. *M. P. Artsibashev* (1878-1927). In Artsibashev's

portrayal of the Jew one discerns a barely concealed germ of contempt behind the flimsy veil of sentimental pity. The tornado of the Bolshevik revolution has torn off the veil; and contempt, fed on shattered hopes and smashed illusions, has begun to grow and thrive and show the fangs of hatred.

The recent development of this author's sentiment does not concern us here, for it has found expression in acrimonious editorials which few people read, and fewer esteem. It aids us, however, in our attempt to fathom the depths of his past sympathies. It explains the mediocrity and shallowness of his Jewish portraits, by exposing the artificiality and shallowness of the sympathy which had impelled them.

In his famous novel *Sanin*, Artsibashev follows the fashion by placing the powerful, proud, red-blooded Russian hero, Sanin, alongside of the pale, floundering, desolate Jew, Soloveichik.

We first meet Soloveichik at an underground meeting of revolutionary workers and students. He is "a young, dark-eyed Jew with the curly hair and bad teeth, which, as he was continually smiling, were always displayed." He has "a feeble, unsteady voice," and gesticulates in a "ludicrous fashion." He is fidgety, timid, awkward. "He gets in everyone's way," he stumbles, he stammers... Some of the revolutionary comrades behave "rudely" towards him. One of the characters in the novel motivates his dislike for Soloveichik by saying, "He is such a worm," a more incisive and specific way of saying, "he is disgusting to me because he is like that..."

One evening Sanin pays the little Jew a visit. This visit seems most unnatural. We fail to understand what prompted the strong, rapacious Sanin to call on Soloveichik, who most likely was disgusting to him. Sanin had nothing to do there. He comes, arrayed in the cloak

of a Nietzschean superman, at the behest of the author who has a philosophy to expound, who is determined to pit the "Blond Beast" versus the "bad-toothed" Galilean, the pagan versus the Judaeo-Christian, self-assertion versus self-abnegation, physical joy versus asceticism, life versus death.

Life triumphs.

A few hours after the above visit, Soloveichik, acting on Sanin's vague suggestion, commits suicide. His last note reads:

"Why should I live, since I do not know how I ought to live? Men such as I cannot make their fellow-creatures happy."

Soloveichik, dead, is likable; "There was poor Soloveichik, great of heart, living in our midst, ready to make any sacrifice, and to suffer for others. Yet nobody... noticed him or appreciated him. In fact, we despised him. This was because he could not express himself, and his anxiety to please only had an irritating effect, though in reality he was striving to get into closer touch with all of us, and to be helpful and kind. He was a saint, and we looked upon him as a fool!"

Soloveichik was a saint, a Christ. But Artsibashev, the young Nietzschean, felt that for the sake of a freer and more beautiful life it is well that weak, ludicrous incompetents like Soloveichik should make their exit and give way to the Sanins, who, with their chests out and their eyes aglow, go forth to meet the dawn....

The Blond Beast won...Paraphrasing Brutus he might have said: "As Soloveichik loved us, I weep for him; as he was funny, I laughed at him; as he was good, I honor him; but as he was Christ, I slew him."

Thirteen years later, in 1916, when Antichrist was about to triumph on the battle field of Armageddon, Artsibashev forgot his youthful vagaries. This time he pray-

ed that the Christ he had once slain should come back to life, and bring "peace on earth and good-will to man!" The weak, ludicrous, imcompetent Jew, now named Hershel Mak, was resurrected. He was brought on the battlefield.

He fought, he bled, he saw his Jewish and Russian comrades die together, their blood mingling in one red stream. He was caught in an ambush together with his Russian comrades. The Austrians on one side, and the Russians on the other, feared to make a step. Hours of excruciating tension...But—

"At the very moment when the tension reached its highest point and the nightmare was about to pass in a ruthless engagement, Hershel Mak, unable to control his strained nerves any longer, began to pray plaintively in the tongue of his father: 'Isroel...Shma Isroel!' His comrades did not understand him and glanced at him in terror, as at a mad-man, but from the opposite side another frightened and plaintive voice answered him in Jewish: 'A Jew...A Jew...'"

The mad joy that flooded the hearts of the two Jews is indescribable. "Then Hershel Mak and the Jew in the light-grey cloak rushed to the clearing and, splashing in the water, trustingly ran to each other... they felt like two old friends..." Hatred vanished like an evil nightmare. The Christians, Austrians and Russians, withdrew their rifles. Owing to the Jews there was at least one little local interlude of peace on earth and good-will to man.

"Hershel chattered like a monkey, joining now one, now another of the soldiers. He was saying something about his joy, about the great mission of Judaism. But no one listened to him, and one of the soldiers said good-naturedly: 'Go to the devil, you scabby Jew.'"

The above story, "The Jew," published in the *Shield,* is the quintessence of slush and sentimentality, and is in perfect harmony with the rest of the artistic material contained in that maudlin volume.

On the whole, we find in Artsibashev a strained dualism. No doubt Hershel Mak, if he should ever happen to read "The Jew," would be considerably flattered and pleased by the fine part he had been made to play as the symbol of international peace in the midst of the horrors of the Great War. But we are equally certain that, if possessed of any sensitiveness at all, he would resent Artsibashev's comparing him to a chattering monkey, just as much as he undoubtedly did resent the Russian soldier's good-natured "Go to the devil, you scabby Jew." He would even become as apprehensive of Artsibashev's friendship as of the soldier's good-nature. There is a trace of contempt in the attitude of both.

After all, Hershel Mak must have known many a friendly, good-natured peasant, who, content with a jocose "Go to the devil, you scabby Jew," in ordinary times, would drive nails into the heads of Jewish children when sufficiently aroused and incited. The same with Artsibashev. In ordinary times he contented himself with drawing Jewish monkey-internationalists and worm-saints. Symbols are symbols. But woe to the monkey or the worm who would bolt at being used for allegorical purposes, who would insist on proclaiming its ego, its right to actual, material, individual existence. Then our author would become angry, and in screaming editorials he would begin to denounce the worm or the monkey as a scoundrel, as a Bolshevik, as a destroyer of the Russian land. For, to quote Nietzsche, "One does not hate as long as one disesteems, but only when one esteems equal or superior."

11. *A. Kuprin.* (1870-). Kuprin, like Chekhov, is

not a moralizer, he is primarily interested in telling a good story. Though liberal, he is open and fearless. He does not become self-conscious when he approaches a Jewish subject; he does not fumble, cough, or hem. He is neither accuser nor apologist. He obviously knows the Jew and does not find it hard to tell about him; his attitude is simple. He is above all an artist. Extraneous sociological or economic implications are accidental, they do not motivate Kuprin's writing. Though most of his Jewish characters belong to the poorer classes, Kuprin does not sermonize about them, or rhapsodize over them. Some of his Jews are good, others are bad. With some he sympathizes, others he detests. Into the stifling, maudlin atmosphere with which other Russian writers enveloped the Jews, Kuprin's stories come like a cool, refreshing breeze.

To be sure, we still have the beautiful Jewish woman; but how differently the modern author reacts to her! Etlia is the wife of a Jewish inn-keeper. Out of the drab frame of squalor, poverty, and ignorance, her well-nigh celestial beauty dazzles the young Russian physician whom fate has brought into the dingy inn ("The Jewess").

Only for a moment does the Jewess stimulate in the doctor the traditional reaction of a Russian gentleman toward a Jewess. Gradually the crass and the material are dissolved in a haze. There is an aureole of unearthliness about the woman. In his revery, the young man envisages her as the eternal symbol of her undying race, "the wonderful and incomprehensible Jewish people." He sees nations and empires rise, flourish, and crumple into dust, leaving vague legends and pitiful remnants behind them for the delectation of the antiquarian and the curio-collector; while the Jews, the mysterious people, have not only survived, but have preserved their strong, fer-

vid Southern type, their faith so full of great hopes and trifling customs, their sacred language, their mystical alphabet which breathes of millenial antiquity.

"Indeed," he muses, "perhaps the destinies of peoples do have their own incomprehensible and mystical purposes. Perhaps it was the will of some Higher Power that the Jews, having lost their father-land, should play the rôle of an eternal ferment in the colossal world upheavals."

His reveries turn back to the woman. Her beauty inspires him with "divine ecstasy." He sees in her the Madonna and all the unforgettable images of the Biblical women. "Beholding her, one believes; one feels; one, as it were, sees how this people goes back in its dizzying genealogy to Moses, rises to Abraham and higher, and still higher—straight up to the great, terrible, revengeful Biblical God!"

Beauty and poetry, a feeling of nostalgia, a yearning for an ideal gone and irrecoverable, pervade the story. Some of the passages may create the false impression of sententiousness. In the text they are so skilfully interwoven with the story, they are so inevitably a part of it, that they lose even the faintest suggestion of any but an artistic purpose.

In "A Jewish Wedding," in "The Coward," and in "Gambrinus," our Russian author seems to such an extent saturated with his material that his stories strike one as the refractions of Jewish life through the soul of a Jew; they appear the self-revelations of a Jew.

"The Coward" begins with a wonderfully vivid description of Isaac Rubinstein's wine cellar in one of the small border-towns in Southwestern Russia. The place is packed with Jews; the atmosphere is thick with smoke, impetuous, rattling Yiddish, exaggerated gesticulations, and vapors of Bessarabian wine. Suddenly there is an

urgent knock on a table, and a peremptory demand for silence: "Sha-a-a" (hush). Two itinerant actors, Tsirelman and his assistant, make their appearance in the center of the shop. Tsirelman's face, decorated with absorbent cotton, bears an "odd, pathetic resemblance" to the faces of the Old-Testament prophets. He is ragged and worn. His assistant has no make-up. "Shaaaa-a, it's Tsirelman," some one whispers. Silence reigns in the cellar. The feeble imploring voice of the old, homeless father who begs his son for shelter plucks the heart-strings of the audience. The son is heartless, he refuses to acknowledge the old man's parental rights. He is a man of the new generation, old customs and traditions mean little to him, he repudiates the old man. The play reaches its climax, tears roll down the old man's face, his voice trembles, now it sinks to a hoarse tragic whisper, now it ascends to a heart-rending groan. In this weird incantation one feels "the throb of the ancient, many-aged Biblical anguish, that resounds with such plaintive inconsolable force in all Jewish prayers and songs." The audience is deeply affected. They blow their noses, they sigh, they rub their eyes. When Tsirelman's dramatic monologue comes to an end, when the play is over, "the spectators, quiet, motionless and strained, with bated breath and half-opened mouths, continue staring at him. And so great is the enchantment cast over these poor, simple, warm hearts, that they can hardly come to; even after Tsirelman removes his make-up." But the actor is still in a trance—"his eyes are red, beads of perspiration, like jewels, glisten on his temples and on the tip of his nose; but his frowning face still preserves the remote and haughty expression characteristic of the real artist who had just lived through a sweet and painful moment of inspiration."

Tsirelman has a real histrionic talent, he has fire, im-

agination, emotion. He transcends the absurdity of the plot and the bovine indifference of his assistant. He touches the hearts of simple folk. Yet, this potentially great artist is a coward; he is shamefully, disgracefully afraid. He is too sensitive, too imaginative, too high-strung, and too weak.

Tsirelman's meeting with Faibish, the smuggler; the latter's overwhelmingly forceful personality and persuasive power; the performer's agreement to join him in a smuggling escapade; the escapade; their being pursued by the guards; the actor's mortal fear which breaks out into screams; the smuggler's iron will, courage, and relentlessness as he tries to silence the coward by shooting at him and finally flinging him out of the sled; the coward's peaceful, happy, chuckle when he finally finds himself at home, in his bed, near his wife, and in safety—all this is narrated in a masterly fashion.

Faibish is splendidly drawn. He is an absolutely new type of Jew in Russian literature. Instead of the eternal and wearisome contrasts between Pronins and Raukhs, Artems and Kains, mighty Russian sailors and timid little Itskas, pagan Sanins and weak Soloveichiks; Kuprin juxtaposes the extraordinarily powerful, daring, and enterprising contrabandist, the Jewish driver, Faibish, to the timid, imaginative, sensitive artist, Tsirelman. To those who have met within the Pale Jewish drivers, blacksmiths, and butchers, Kuprin's description of Faibish will appear strikingly real. "Not very tall, but broad, heavy and mighty, he resembled a stump of an ancient oak . . ." "His great physical strength, his audacity, his ferocity were known far beyond the boundaries of the district." It was rumored that he had once killed a Russian customs guard, but that there was not sufficient evidence on which to hold him. His expedition is a marvel of grit and daring. Among the pale host of

anemic Jews, among the doleful flock of plucked chickens, Faibish's crimson face, and thick bandy-legs, are delightful testimony of Kuprin's originality and artistic powers.

"Gambrinus" is one of the most charming of Kuprin's stories. Here we have the story of a Jewish fiddler who played in the wine shop "Gambrinus" in Odessa. Sashka, the fiddler, was a musician by the grace of God. A lonely soul, he had only a trembling little white poodle as inseparable companion. In the wine shop Sashka was an institution: he was loved and admired by the patrons—Russian longshoremen, English, French, and Italian sailors, Georgians, Jews, etc. He performed wonders on his violin—mood followed mood; now there was fire, and dash, and abandon; now the violin would go off into a sad moan of the Siberian steppes; now there would be the tripping music of a jig; now the voluptuous strains of a cake-walk. When alone, he would put his poodle on his lap and draw forth interminable moans of Jewish anguish from his obedient instrument.

But troublesome times came. The Russo-Japanese war broke out in all its fury. Sashka was drafted, Gambrinus became desolate—no makeshift musician could replace Sashka. Shortly after peace was declared, Sashka was back in Gambrinus. But now the rumble of revolutionary storms reverberated through the ancient walls of Gambrinus. Sashka began to play the Marseillaise, and made it the most popular tune in the lower depths. Reaction projected its evil claws; this too was felt in Gambrinus, Sashka was forbidden by the police to play hymns. The "Black Hundred" began to bait the Jews, pogroms were incited, atrocities were committed—this, too, reflected on Sashka's fortunes. Yet this was not all. Misfortune, once she had espied Sashka, followed him every-

where. The tragic incident which brought Sashka's career to a sudden and painful termination is powerfully told:

"Certain unbridled people, in Manchurian shakos, with ribbons of St. George in the buttonholes of their jackets, made the rounds of the restaurants and with insistent impudence demanded that national hymns be played, and saw that every one arose..."

"One day ten of them came into Gambrinus and took up two tables. They deported themselves in the most provocative manner. They expectorated and spilt their beer on the floor, they shouted, abused the help, etc. They were provocateurs. One of them, Motka Gundossy, was the ring-leader—"red-headed, snuffling, with a nose that had been broken; a man of great physical strength, a converted Jew, an erstwhile thief, a bouncer in a brothel next, and then a souteneur and catchpole."

Gundossy demanded that Sashka play "God Save the Tsar," the latter refused:

"No hymn," he quoted the police.

"What?" roared Gundossy; "you won't obey? Oh, you stinking sheeney!"

"And you?"

"What about me?"

"I'm a stinking sheeney. Well, all right. And you?"

"I'm Orthodox."

"Orthodox? And for how much?"

All Gambrinus burst into laughter, while Gundossy, all white with anger, turned around to his comrades.

"Brothers," he was declaring, in a tremulous, plaintive voice, the memorized words, "Brothers, how long will we stand for the sheeneys reviling our throne and holy church?..."

Here Sashka's anger rose to tremendous heights: "You," cried out Sashka, "you, you son of a bitch! Show me your face, you murderer. Look at me! Nu!"

"Sashka's fiddle was raised high, flashed quickly through the air, and—crash! the tall man in the shako swayed from a ringing blow on the temple! The fiddle flew into pieces. Only its neck, raised victoriously above the heads of the crowd, remained in Sashka's hands."

Sashka, however, was not touched, he was screened by a mighty wall that rose to his defense. The provocateurs were thrown out of the cellar. Sashka was subsequently arrested on political charges. In the prison he was beaten mercilessly, one of his arms was crippled.

When a few months later Sashka made his appearance in the Gambrinus someone shouted:

"Fellows—Sashka!"

"All turned around and got up from their kegs. Yes, it was he—the twice resurgent Sashka, but now bearded, emaciated, pale. They all made a rush for him, surrounding him, squeezing and mauling him, thrusting mugs of beer upon him."

When it was discovered that Sashka's arm was crippled, a hush of horror fell over the company. But carefree Sashka's eyes began to sparkle, he got out of his pocket an ocarina and began piping a deafening, a mirthful dance.

"O-ho-ho!" The spectators went into peals of joyous laughter.

"The devil!" exclaimed the boatswain, and, altogether unexpectedly, even to himself, executed a skillful step and started doing the rapid figures of a dance. Caught up by his impulse all the guests, women as well as men, began dancing..."

Kuprin concludes the story with this cheering exclamation:

"Nothing matters! Man may be crippled—but art will endure all things, and will all things conquer!"

Sashka is a lovable and true character. The author liked Sashka; he did not pity him. He chose this subject because it was interesting, not because it would lend itself to a sermon on the injustice of anti-Semitism, on universal brotherhood, on the evils of pogroms, or on the debt humanity owes to the creators of Gods and religions. Kuprin did not try to prove anything, his imagination was not stifled by extra-aesthetic considerations. Of course, Sashka is sympathetic, yet there is Gundossy, a detestable wretch, also a Jew. And in the *Pit,* besides a pathetic though likable pair of a Jewish prostitute and her Jewish lover, Kuprin created Semion Yakovlevich Gorizont, an abhorrent creature, a pimp, a white slaver who sells the girl he had once loved into a brothel, a worm who gloats over filthy jokes and pornographic pictures, a coxcomb whose glib tongue and veneer of culture accentuate his utterly depraved and cynical nature—he too is a Jew, and he too is realistically, uncannily drawn. Gorizont's assistants are also Jews. Kuprin did not hesitate, he wrote what he saw. He was a sufficiently fine artist not to have fallen into the common fallacy of the Russian author who saw all Jews as either exclusively good, or exclusively bad.

12. *E. Chirikov.* (1864-). Chirikov's play, *The Jews,* though in part garrulous and preceptive, succeeds in presenting a number of Jewish characters—idealists and materialists, nationalists and socialists—with comparative vividness and sympathy. The types, as well as the treatment, are a new departure in Russian literature. The play is the nearest approach a Russian author has made to an adequate study of the intellectual and spiritual conflicts and problems within the Pale.

The scene is laid in a typical Jewish town within the

Ghetto. The drama takes place in 1903, contemporaneously with the Kishinev pogrom, and is centered in the family of Leiser Frankel, an old watchmaker. In the background, faint at first, then ever more persistent and ominous, is the dull rumble of an approaching pogrom; in the last act the tempo rises to a terrific crescendo; smashing of windows, yells, whistles, drunken laughter, screams of anguish, broken skulls, shooting.... The storm breaks out in elemental fury—Leiser Frankel is wounded, his son is wounded, his sister is dead, his beautiful daughter kills herself, the nest is broken and deserted.

Many poignant motifs run through the drama: the ever-recurring tragedy of fathers and children; of Nationalism and Internationalism, Zionism and Marxism, not as mere abstractions, but embodied in flesh and blood, and pitted against each other in a moment of crucial significance. There is also the inevitable triangle, made more acute by the circumstance that a Christian and a Jew are both in love with the same Jewish girl, and that the girl, a daughter of a religious father to whom she is strongly attached, is drawn to the Christian.

A host of Jewish characters march across the stage. Here we have the old Leiser Frankel, with his "long, grey beard, and heavy overhanging eyebrows. A figure reminding one of the Biblical Patriarchs." A pious, honest, inoffensive Jewish watchmaker, trying hard to make a living and give his children an education in Russian universities.

We come to know his children, Boris and Leah, both expelled from the University, "for participating in political disturbances." Unwittingly the children bring unhappiness to their father. Their careers are ruined. Boris has to go up for trial; he may be sent to prison. Leah is in love with a Christian fellow-revolutionist. Despite their great mutual love, the children and the father fail to

understand one another—there is constant friction and nagging. No compromise is possible. For Leiser to submit, would be equivalent to giving up his personality. The children, on the other hand, influenced by their environment, fling themselves into the Russian revolutionary parties. They see a solution for the narrow Jewish problem, as well as for many other perturbing social and economic problems, in the ascendancy of the proletariat, in Marxian Socialism, in Internationalism. As Leiser says, "the children have no mercy either upon themselves or upon their parents." The revolutionary movement is stern and exacting. A revolutionist cannot stop, musing whether "to be or not to be;" he is no Hamlet. In his Quixotic zeal he may attack useful and beautiful windmills. Alongside of much good, he may perpetrate a great deal of evil and cruelty, but all this is unavoidable and is in the very nature of revolutions and revolutionists. Friction is inevitable. The conflict between conservative parents and revolutionary children raged in most families in Russia, Christian and Jewish alike. In the case of the Jews, however, the situation was aggravated by the fact that the young Jewish revolutionists tended toward atheism. The older generation feared that, abandoning their religion, the young Jews were deserting their race, were being sucked into the vortex of the Slavic waters about them.

One of the most tragic figures in the whole play is that of Nakhman, the ever-intense, neurotic, idealistic Zionist. He is a Jewish scholar, he loves the Jewish traditions and Hebrew lore. He has suffered much, has been deprived of much, because of his Jewishness. His Nationalism has become morbid, hyper-sensitive. Even Leah, his love, has been taken from him by a Russian, a Christian. All his passion, all his tenderness, all his love, he now consecrates to the cause of Jewish regeneration. He abhors fraternization with the Christians. He says: "I

never had a childhood, Leah, I recall only riots, hunger, and tears..." and further—"I can only remember how I was kicked on all sides. It is hard, after such a childhood and youth, to love the whole human race..."

Among other Jewish characters, besides the timid and sentimental Shloime, and the ironically cheerful factotum and newspaper dealer, Sruel—we meet the very interesting, polished, and silk-hatted Dr. Furman. To him Socialism and Zionism are chimerical undertakings. An opportunist, he views these "Utopias" rather cynically. Zionism is absurd, its only virtue is in the consolation it brings to the masses. According to Dr. Furman, the acquisition of wealth, with the social position and adulation that accompany it, is for the Jew the soundest way out of his dilemma.

More delicately worked out and more affecting than Nakhman's tragedy is that of the charming and innocent Leah. She is torn in twain. An unbridgeable chasm gapes between her two selves. Only a Jew who has lived through a similar conflict will understand Leah's tragedy when she says: "During those two years I forgot the fact that I was a Jewess. Life there was full of interest, and I drank deep of all that was offered me. On my way home, on the dusty road, I shuddered when I saw the first Jew in gabardine... I looked at him and began to feel as though I had seen an old, half-ruined house, vacant and out of the way, in which I had lived when I was a little girl."

When Leah is with Jews, with Nakhman for instance, she feels Russian; when she is with her Russian lover, Berezin, she feels deeply and immutably Jewish. She loves Berezin, but somehow she feels "as though she were angry with him." Something undermines her confidence. All the wrongs Jews had suffered at the hands of non-Jews rise in her memory—the little Jewish boy-

fiddler who was maimed by the Christian urchins; the equivocal answer of the Russian priest when he was asked by his students whether Jews use Christian blood for ritual purposes. "It was a real tragedy to me then," she muses, "I just recall it now, and it seems as if it is not ended yet; and it will never end as long as I live."

At times this revolutionist, this economic determinist, expresses ideas and sentiments which, from a Marxian point of view, are utterly heretical and heterodox. "It must be," she says, "that in the depth of every human being there is a mysterious tie that joins him to his nationality and religion." "Religion?" exclaims Berezin. "Yes," she replies, "our religion does not trouble me much, for I know that there is a great deal of nonsense in it. But whenever I hear my father chant the Sabbath prayers, something suddenly moves in me, deep, deep, in my soul. It reminds me always of those nearest and closest, and I become sad. (Softly) I feel as if I would, just then, cry my heart out."

Not only Masha, the ignorant Russian servant girl, but Berezin, Leah's lover, the emancipated, revolutionary student, in describing a Jew, says: "He is a Jew, but he is so good—so good that he is nothing like a Jew." No wonder Leah feels the "wretched ambiguity" of Berezin's position. "It is strange," she says, "when you see a high-minded Jew whom you cannot reproach, you say that he is not like a Jew. Why do you say so?" It is indeed a twisted logic that acknowledges black sheep as sheep, and that converts white sheep into Christians.

There was no way of resolving the dualism within Leah's soul. In the last overpowering scene this dualism is symbolized in Berezin and Leiser struggling within Leah's soul for the possession of it. Leiser wins, for Leah, refusing to take refuge under the wings of Berezin, remains with her father. Berezin wins, for in her last

moments she thinks of him, and tries to save him by telling the mob that he is a Christian. The dichotomy of Leah's soul is finally resolved in death. She shoots herself while the mob rushes toward her. The gruesome realism of the mob scene is unforgettable:

"The witch has killed herself."

"Go in, Vaska! She is still warm. You won't be too late" (laughter).

The mob howls, and roars, and whistles...The Jewish intellectual perishes in the maze of his inner contradictions. Darkness reigns all around... And yet, Chirikov sees a ray of hope in the International movement of the proletariat.

His curmudgeonly Jewish mechanic, Iserson, is a fully class-conscious worker. As such he is beyond the tragic dualism of the Jewish intellectual revolutionist. He has the revolutionary formula at his finger tips. He has read and is familiar with the socialist classics. He quotes Marx, Engels, Bebel, etc. He is intolerant of the nationalistic utterances of the Zionist Nakhman. "When a man once understands that one human being should not attempt to oppress another," he enjoins, "then he is no more a Russian, a Pole, or a Jew...He is simply a man..." He knows what he wants. When the pogrom breaks out, the workingmen's organization, to which Iserson belongs, Jews and Christians together, go forth armed to fight the Black hundred pillagers.

Iserson is the first, and up to 1912 the only, revolutionary, class-conscious Jewish worker in Russian literature.

13. *V. Ropshin* (*B. Savinkov*). While the reactionary press and the henchman of the Tsar were making an awful hullabaloo about the corrosive influence of the Jewish revolutionist, the ideologists of spineless liberalism insisted on slobbering all over the poor little Jew. Thus the type of the Jewish rebel, socialist, propagandist, con-

spirator, and terrorist, though incontestably a potent factor in the revolutionary fermentation that was shaking the Empire, found up to Chirikov no representation in literature. In "The Jews" we have seen the Jewish middle-class revolutionist in a state of unstable equilibrium, in the midst of and in conflict with his national environment. There the major part of the young rebel's moral energy seemed to be consumed in reconciling or accentuating the dualism in his Russian-Jewish psyche. Iserson, the Jewish workingman, was the single notable exception; in his dogmatic, self-assured way he succeeded in transcending the conflict which reacted so devastatingly on the spiritual harmony of the Jewish "intelligent."

The Jew in the party milieu, active, heroic, and self-abnegating, completely and irrevocably allied to the cause of the revolution, undergoing unspeakable hardships, carrying a disproportionately heavy burden on his numerically weak shoulders, equal to his Christian brothers in his readiness to face the gallows and Siberia, a victim of the same temptations and weaknesses, subject to the same follies and puerile enthusiasms, inspired by the same Utopian dreams, dispirited and demoralized by the same evil forces of secrecy, political murder, and espionage, a respected and beloved comrade—this Jew enters Russian literature for the first time in 1912, with Savinkov's *What Never Happened.*

Together with the Russians—Boltov, Seriozha, Volodia, and others—we meet David Cohn and Zalkind, Arkady Borisovich Rosenstern and Ruvim Epstein, Abram and Solomon Moisievich Bukh. Some of these Jews are members of local committees; some, of the Central Revolutionary Committee; all of them occupy responsible posts. In a sense they are all alike, they are revolutionists who have burned the bridges behind them; their lives are entirely wrapped in party activities; they have no social

interests, not even family bonds, strong enough to impede their efficiency; they are thoroughly disciplined and at the beck and call of the organization, always ready to peregrinate to a different province, to a more strategic position.

Though alike, they are different. While molding them true to the revolutionary type, Savinkov projects into strong relief each one's individual characteristics. They differ in physical appearance, temperament, intellectual power, strength of will, and final outlook. Their racial characteristics, though mentioned, are not stressed. There is relatively little race consciousness within the movement. The tendency toward class solidarity seems to be much stronger than the leaning toward national separatism. In this, Savinkov's treatment is a fore-shadowing of what has until recently been the literary fashion in Communist Russia.

One of the most winning characters in the novel is David Cohn. There is an elegiac mellowness in the author's treatment of David. Though the portrait still bears traces of the stencil in vogue—David is sickly, weak, enthusiastic, muddle-headed, imaginative, gentle, timid, heroic, and touchingly loyal—it nevertheless is radiantly alive. Here we are made to feel reality, Russian reality, with all its poignancy, all its absurdity, incongruousness, and fantasticality.

A ghastly reality, indeed, that impelled timid little Dave, to whom death was so repugnant, whose entire delicate being recoiled from it, rebelled against it, to put his head voluntarily into the lion's jaws by inciting army insurrections, by fighting on the barricades, by taking part in terrorist activities, etc., a frightful reality, no doubt, that made the essentially mild, religious David hold a loaded pistol against the temple of a wretched, shivering, helpless chief of the secret police. It matters

very little that the chief deserved it, the horrible incongruity lies in the fact that, of all people, David should have been the one to do it! David broke down when he beheld the entreating wife. "Somebody was sobbing in a corner. It was David, by the hall-rack, half-hidden by a gendarme's uniform."

The last minutes of David, who was shot without trial, are deeply touching. Day was dawning. "As if in a dream, he saw he was in the hall again and realized he was being taken out into the yard . . . And as in a lightning flash it came to David that the snow, the rifles, the patch of grey sky, the shaven adjutant with the stern face, all that was the unknown thing called death of which he had been afraid his whole life. The trembling stopped at once. He raised his head, but lowered it again immediately. The snow tickled his cheeks and fell into his eyes. He saw nothing more. A yellow flame leaped out. On the spot where David had just stood against the wall, a pitiful, shrivelled, superfluous body lay huddled up helplessly. The snow fell unceasingly."

An entirely different type of Jewish terrorist is presented in Arkady Borisovich Rosenstern. He is a Jewish intellectual, a member of the Central Revolutionary Committee, and one of the directing geniuses of the movement. "Rosenstern was about thirty-two years old, of small build, with a thick, rough beard and black eyes flashing youthfully . . . His appearance was very mild, typically Jewish, though the strong, short neck and the broad round shoulders gave the impression of obstinacy and power." Arkady Borisovich was certainly no "plucked chicken." He had been himself a daring, active terrorist and had been involved in many dangerous exploits before he became a member of the Central Committee. He feels the terrible responsibility of his position. There is

a note of genuine pathos, of doubts stoically crushed, in the personality of this "powerful Sovereign who knew his own right. . . ."

Another Jew is Solomon Moiseyevich Bukh, that "vigorous old man from Siberia," who, when finally discovered, offered armed resistance by barricading himself in his room and keeping up a fire against the besiegers until he ran out of bullets, and who "was killed in the morning through an opening cut in the ceiling."

We also meet the old professional conspirator, Zalkind, who had suffered for the revolution, who had known the lice and squalor of many Russian prisons, but who had finally made of his suffering a fetish and a topic for interminable conversation. He had "a greenish, sickly face covered with red pimples . . . little inflamed eyes, an untidy coat, and an exaggerated friendliness and familiarity."

Besides, there is the excellently drawn, neurasthenic, excitable, impressionable weakling—Ruvim Epstein. The revolution with its high sounding phrases and slogans; terrorism and expropriation with their ostensible amoralism; the atmosphere of suspicion, secrecy, and espionage; the roar of bursting bombs and the blood of mangled bodies, were too much for this morally and intellectually unstable youth. His is a typical case of hysteria engendered in the hectic atmosphere of the revolution. From a violent revolutionist, addicted to pompous words and inflated sentiments, he becomes, without realizing it, by a curious distortion of his bizarre logic and a perversely understood Nietzscheanism, a tool of the secret police. Indeed, if it is true that "only silly people say: this is not allowed, that must not be done, this is not good, that is bad, this is immoral," then why should Ruvim Epstein abide by the precepts of "silly people?" Good and bad are relative terms: a police spy is bad, a spy on the police

is good. Why not join the police force, spy on it and at the same time make the Tsar's government pay one a munificent salary? Poor Ruvim Epstein in his buoyant insouciance does not forsee that for his salary he will have to show tangible returns. Thus is he asphyxiated in the poison of his own volatile, "superman" philosophy, discovering, however, towards the end of his career how infinitely more complex life is than any individual little Ruvim Epstein with his crackling, sizzling, cure-all little dogmas.

The Jewish worker is represented in Abram, the Vilna tanner, the desperate terrorist and expropriator. What unusual colors Ropshin uses in depicting the Jew: "A tall, broad-shouldered man of about thirty...a huge, good-natured giant, with a broad child-like face..." with "smiling Jewish eyes and naive simplicity of soul." A veritable Artem, except for the smiling Jewish eyes! Abram is always ready to undergo all dangers, to undertake the most perilous commissions, for "neither editorials, nor the speeches of orators had convinced him of the necessity of a 'systematic terror.' Experience, pogroms, houses burned down and children shot to death had taught him the cruelty of the average smug life... He cherished an unshaken faith that he was blessed by the people, by Israel martyred through the centuries..." And yet it is not as a Jew, nor as a member of a Jewish organization, that he fights the revolutionary battles. All his intimate associates are Christians, who love him, and to whom he is devoted. "Load me into a cannon and shoot!" he cries, "I'll put on my coat and be ready."

And he was ready. When the revolution of 1917 came, it was workers like Abram, we imagine, who organized defense detachments and fought the marauding, pillaging gangs of Petlura, who joined the Red Army and helped the Bolshevik Government hurl back the counter-revolu-

tionary hordes of the Kolchaks, the Denikins, the Wrangles, etc. It was they who were active in the local Soviets, in cooperative movements, in reconstruction schemes, in the Comsomol (Communist youth) organization and in the Communist party. It was they, bold, active, self-sacrificing workers, who flocked to the "rabfaks" (workers' faculties) to satisfy their long-repressed craving for light and knowledge. But here we are encroaching upon the present and are anticipating the next, the concluding part of this study.

PART IV

Since 1917

PART IV

SINCE 1917

Up to 1917 the changes within the Pale, though significant, were not sweeping. Quite apart from the Russianized intellectual and the revolutionary worker, there still was the old Ghetto, only slightly modified in ideology and mode of living. There still were the old-fashioned kheders, and yeshivas, and zadiks, and rabbis; people in great numbers still dressed in medieval garb; the "luftmensh" and "shadkhon" still constituted indispensable parts of the scene; the old men still spent their last years in the synagogue poring over the Talmud; Saturdays and other Jewish holidays still had a halo of sanctity about them; the average Jew still looked disapprovingly at the young "heathens" who studied Russian, dressed like Russians, and spoke the Russian language. The germs of disintegration were there, but the thousand-year-old traditions and customs would not yield so easily.

The revolution of 1917 has shattered this age-long structure to its foundations. The Pale is finally and completely stamped out. Ancient institutions and taboos are rapidly disappearing. Old ideas and prejudices are being buried in the limbo of the past. The last vestiges of the venerable Ghetto are being carried away in the mighty avalanche. "Everything is being swept away."

"On Bieologorsk street," complains Ilia Erenburg's pious old Hirsh, the watchmaker of the town, "just opposite the Summer Garden, there used to stand a policeman who never accepted less than half a ruble. He has been swept away. Everything has been swept away. Nobody sits in the house, or even goes out for a walk. People

come together and set off running—whither? Like the sea . . . Things have been growing worse day by day. Soldiers came. There was kissing. Near the railroad station stands Berka, the corset clerk, loaded with ammunition. He can shoot at once, wherever he pleases. Dyshkovich (the rich man of the town) has to get a bill of lading, but he is afraid to steal by. It is as likely as not that Berka will just at that moment become inflamed and fire a bullet right into Dyshkovich's belly. Let rather the goods perish. Zalik the barber shouts and curses. There is something more terrible. For a bottle of vodka the drug-clerk Wolf has got a cannon from the soldiers, has hid it on the roof, and has been boasting that soon he will begin to rule the town. . . The youngsters have assembled in the Garden and passed a resolution: the Torah to be abolished, ten points of revolutionary discipline to be nailed to every door" ("The Steam-ship Ticket").

Yes, everything is adrift. The Jewish craftsmen, the Hirshes, are dazed and bewildered. The Jewish middle-class, the Dyshkoviches, are frightened and ruined. Only the Jewish proletariat, the Berkas, the Zaliks, the Wolfs, the "dictators," are "loaded with ammunition" and "can shoot wherever they please." Only the youngsters are jubilant. Everything is adrift. Everything has been swept aside—legal disabilities, official anti-Semitism, tottering social forms, the old Torah—everything.

Another scene. Yom Kippur. The older generation is in the synagogue. Old Hirsh, lifted on the wings of fervent prayer, beholds from the heights of his ecstasy the whole universe, and he realizes that the universe is a clock. He forgets his pain and fear. With great joy, he hears the creaking, the striking, the moving of the clock, everywhere—in Berdichev, in Odessa, in Warsaw, in Palestine, in the sea, in the sky. Stooped, he joyously drinks in the peals, the sounds. . . Sudden, strange voices.

Laughter. Tumult. Urchins. Berka with bullets around his belly. Soldiers. Zalik waving a flag. The ship is sinking... Berka hushes the rabbi, jumps up and yells: "We're all way behind—we have resolved—God is a capitalistic product—the synagogue to be requisitioned—a club to be named after Comrade Trotsky—a theatrical performance..." "A young high-school student pulls some cake out of his pocket and shoves it straight into his mouth: 'Here it is, fasting...' Berka screams at the top of his lungs: 'Neither God, nor Tsar, nor hero!...'"

But the town is not only overwhelmed by revolution, it is also shattered by counter-revolution and pogroms. The Berkas and Zaliks are not long triumphant. Soon the White Army throws itself upon the town. Everything is in ruins and desolation. Old Hirsh, who has been dreaming of the harmony of the universe, sees his granddaughter raped, and he himself is killed on the threshold of his own house.[1]

This is how Ilia Erenburg, a Jew, saw the Jewish town during the early days of revolution and counter-revolution. In retrospect it appears that no national group in Russia has paid quite so dearly in life and property for the tragedy and the glory of the overturn as have the Jews. The terrific jolt caused by the sudden transition from medievalism to ultra-modernism has in itself been a tremendous and not infrequently fatal shock. The counter-revolutionary pogroms were even worse. Moreover, the whole purpose of the Bolshevik revolution has been to eliminate the middle class.[2] And though in proportion to the entire Russian peasant and worker population the native Russian middle-class were an insignificant minority; we must bear in mind that in proportion to the number of Jews, the Jewish lower middle-class were in an overwhelming majority.[3] Leaving out of consideration the ravages of war which fell most heav-

ily on the Jew because of his geographical position, leaving out the devastation caused by the pogroms, it is obvious that the entire Communist economic, political, and social program was bound to fall most crushingly upon the Jewish population.

For ten years Russian Jewry has been writhing in the pains of a rebirth. The old is in the final agony of extinction, the new is painfully striving toward a readjustment. But while the bulk of Russian Jews is going through these excruciating pains, is becoming proletarianized, is being starved out, is dying off, is settling on the soil; the New Economic Policy of the Government is bringing to the fore a new type of Jewish trader, the Jewish "nepman." Like his predecessors in the Sixties of the last century, he, too, operates in the capitals. He is gaudily dressed, rides about in first class railroad carriages, frequents the best cafés and restaurants, and is altogether too ostentatious not to arouse antagonism. Though few in numbers, the Jewish nepmen, concentrated in the capitals, are very conspicuous. They squander their money right and left. Their lack of confidence in the Government, together with their fear of ruinous taxation, deters them from depositing their money in the bank. There is something hysterical and reckless in the risks they take, in the money they spend.[4]

Another relatively small but important and strategically placed class that has grown especially conspicuous since the outbreak of the revolution, is the Jewish Communist intelligentsia—the professionals, the office clerks, the various government employees. These Jewish revolutionary intellectuals have played a striking part in the life of the country. A few of the most prominent political and military leaders have been Jews. Some of the worthiest contributors to the pictorial and plastic arts, to the theatre and the music of post-revolutionary

Russia have been members of this group. Many of Russia's thinkers, scholars, critics, and literary artists are Russianized children of the Jewish people. Indeed, the literary work of such men as Babel, Shklovsky, Pasternak, Erenburg, and Mandelstamm is eloquent proof that the Jew has become a vital factor in the cultural life of Russia.[5]

Having examined the object, we now turn to the image, to the Jew as reflected in Russian literature. How have the Russian writers reacted to all these changes in Jewish life? What new patterns have they created? Have they, like the Jew Erenburg, expressed admiration for the fighting Jewish youth? or the Jewish intellectual? or the Jewish worker? Have they manifested any sympathy for the suffering Jewish middle-class? for the vanishing pious old Hirshes? Have they revealed any awareness of all these fresh aspects of Jewish life? Or have they remained as impervious, as one-sided, as astigmatic as before?

Among the Russians outside of Russia, among the emigrés, the sentiment has been more or less consistent and definite. Pity and its corresponding image of the poor little Jew have completely disappeared. Admiration is out of the question. Here, for the most part, one encounters anti-Semitism, pure and undefiled—bitterness and hatred fed on disappointment and despair. Just as in the Sixties and Seventies the few Jewish parvenu capitalists, the Varshavsky, the Poliakovs, the Ginzburgs, had eclipsed the rest of Jewry; so now the few Jewish Communist leaders, the Trotskys, the Zinovievs, the Riazanovs, etc., have obscured the rest of Jewry from the eyes of the Russian writer. Now as then, these few Jews have been rendered so much more conspicuous by their presence in the capitals, in Leningrad, in Moscow, in the Russian holy of holies—the Kremlin. The invasion of

communists is bad enough, but of Jewish communists—this is another foreign invasion. What though there are only about thirty thousand Jews in the Russian Communist Party? Their position of cultural preeminence makes them most conspicuous and creates in the superficial observer, outside and inside of Russia, the false impression that the Jew is the sole generator and beneficiary of the revolution.[6]

While discussing Artsibashev, we had occasion to point out this old, new tendency. In General Krasnov's ambitious novel, *From the Double-Headed Eagle to the Red Flag,* extremely popular among the emigrés, this fallacious reasoning stands out in all its purity. He says: "The Soviet of People's Commissaries is three-quarters Jewish. Among the Russian rulers, Lenin is under suspicion, while Trotsky and Ziniviev are Jews. The peace of Brest-Litovsk has been concluded by the Jew Jaffe. Russian foreign policy is being conducted, Russia is being sold wholesale by Radek and Litvinov—Jews. Karl Marx was a Jew. That's enough."

Krasnov's novel is straight-from-the-shoulder anti-Semitism. Of course the Jewish capitalist is not quite so objectionable to the General, for he, too, is an emigré. But the sins of the Trotskys are visited upon the Jew. In reply to his argument that not all Jews are communists, one of the patriotic Russian dignitaries in the novel expostulates: "In its nature, the Russian people is merciful and magnanimous. Were it not for the Jewish Soviet of Russian Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, were it not for that mongrel Kerensky, Prince Lvov would have most honorably dispatched the Tsar and his family to England. And do you think that, without the Zhid Sverdlov, without the Zhid Urovsky, Russians would dare to encroach upon the person of the Tsar? . . . They could be guilty of any kind of rascality, you know, but not of this."

A similar attitude is maintained by well-nigh most of the other emigré writers.[7] Even the anecdotes current among the Russians reveal the same conception of the post-revolutionary Jew.[8]

Thus as regards the Russian writers outside of Russia, their feeling appears to be definite and clear-cut. They hate. After all, they are no more than human. It is natural, even if not always logical, to blame something or someone for one's misfortunes. To blame oneself, to blame the whole history of Tsarist Russia, to blame the Russian peasant and worker is not quite so soothing as to find a scapegoat in the ubiquitous Jew.

Within Soviet Russia the attitudes have been more confused. In the first ecstatic years of revolution and suffering, communist writers, Jews and non-Jews alike, had flung aside all race distinctions. Their heroes were treated as members of definite social classes—proletarians, peasants, priests, bourgeois; the characteristics emphasized were class characteristics. Racial features and peculiarities, if mentioned at all, were incidental. With the change in the economic policy, however, with the emergence of the Russian and Jewish nepmen, of the Russian and Jewish bureaucrats, there seems to have been a recrudescence of old attitudes. A partial reversion to competitive bourgeois forms seems to have produced a partial reversion to older bourgeois sentiments. These tendencies are very recent, the material at our disposal is not at all exhaustive, and we naturally make no pretense at scientific finality. What we offer is not definite proof and evidence, but suggestions and clues. We leave it to the future historian who will have the advantages of completeness of material and proper perspective to draw definite and final conclusions. Here we merely attempt, from a distance, to seize and estimate the fleeting moment. We may also add that, from a literary point of view,

neither the stories nor the authors pertinent to this study are of much importance. Their significance lies in their diagnostic value; they are simply interesting symptoms of social tendencies.

Thus, for example, traces of the earlier, comradely, strictly-proletarian attitude are discernable in G. Nikifirov's rambling narrative, *Grey Days* (1926). Here, among a host of others, is presented a Jewish revolutionist, Gurvich, a very sympathetic and heroic figure resembling Savinkov's Abram. Another instance in point is Marietta Shaginian's "Agit-Car" (1923), where we also have a heroic Jew, a communist, a commissar, who goes to death in the full faith that he is dying at the dawn of a new life.

There is, however, an increasing number of other stories, as for example "The Apple" (1925), by A. Puchkov and "The Moon From the Right Side" (1927), by S. Malashkin, that suggest an entirely different trend, a reviving bourgeois proclivity to attack and ridicule.

The first story, Puchkov's "The Apple," is related by one Mitka the Sailor, a dare-devil Russian who has gone through the purgatory of war, hunger, and revolution. A bandit at one time, then a Red soldier, and later a miner, Mitka is a representative post-revolutionary Russian proletarian. In the course of his narrative he tells of the super-human efforts the miners made to save the half-ruined mines. Darkness. Dampness. Hunger. Death. Eight months of torture, then things began to look a bit brighter. The mines had been saved, more were rapidly being put into working order. But Mitka was torn with anguish. What was getting on his nerves most was the high living of the "Spets," the specialists employed by the administration of the mines. He sees the chief engineer, dashing by in an automobile, his "phiz ready to burst." This gentleman "was formerly a stock-holder

in the mines, now he sits in the office as a 'Spets,' his son by his side also installed as an engineer . . . They live—they simply bathe in milk . . ." Disgusted, Mitka comes to the miners' meeting and demands that the specialists be yanked down from their exalted position. "Here," Mitka relates, "the Secretary of the Mestcom (local committee)—Comrade Hirshberg[9]—who had recently come from the Center, threw himself upon me. He was dark, rattling, with a distrustful eye—just as if everyone about him were a swindler. It was clear that he had never held a spade in his hands. He was one of those slick rascals. But when it came to wagging the tongue or pushing the pen he sure was a cracker jack. And he began to yell . . . and spit all over himself . . . and shake his little whiskers . . . a regular pug-dog! I was a hoodlum, a shifter, a counter-revolutionist . . . the specialists were to us the indispensable people, and we must do our best to support them." "I don't argue, but neither are we to be spat upon!" The boys burst out laughing. Hirshberg jumped up, all flushed, and started ringing—ready, it seemed, to smash the bell to pieces. "I," he says, "Comrades, deny you the floor." The fellows started shouting: "Why? Give him the floor! Don't you gag him! Let him talk!" But Hirshberg: "Because," he said, "the Comrade is filibustering; these questions will be taken up at the meeting of the Section." A month of agony. Then it was announced that some miners would be laid off, and I was among them. Hirshberg was on the Committee that did the laying off. I went to him: "Why," I said, "have you laid me off?" He shrugged his shoulders, and smiled derisively. "Because," he said, "we must lay off twenty per cent. We are tightening up the apparatus. As for myself, I think that you are not a class-conscious element, the likes of you we do not need!" I had a bitter taste in my mouth. "O you little rat," thought I, "at the front I

hadn't seen you, in the mines I hadn't seen you, and now it is you who plays the hero, and the indispensable person is after all you, and not I." Mitka left the district and went on the high seas.

We make no apology for this lengthy paraphrase—it is so revealing. Mitka is the Russian worker. Eight years of experimenting, and Mitka has become an utter cynic, and an out-and-out individualist. "Frankly speaking," he philosophizes, "in this life everyone tries to save his own hide first." This sounds like old, familiar, prerevolutionary doctrine. Mitka has evolved a purely bourgeois philosophy. Having developed a very high opinion of himself and his services to society, he is galled now at the engineers and "pen-pushers" for their being so successful at saving their own hides. In his conceit, he is either blind or very forgetful. He does not remember having seen Hirshberg at the front. He forgets that comparatively many more Hirshbergs than Mitkas died on the barricades and in the Tsar's prisons. Nor, of course, could Mitka have possibly seen a Hirshberg in the mines before; there were no mines within the Pale of settlement. This Russian proletarian, or the author who speaks for him, does not realize that he has ceased to be a communist (if he ever was one), and that his resentment is really a resentment against the entire Communist regime. The Hirshbergs have been mere accidents; there have not been enough Russian "pen-pushers," and the Bolshevik Government, in need of literate people, had to enlist the services of some of the more educated Jews.[10] Disappointed at the tardiness of the millenium, confounded by the economic and social contradiction of the transition period, many half-ignorant peasant-workers, and utterly ignorant scribes, have been suffering with a wrong fixation. They have mistaken symptoms for causes, and in their blindness have assailed the symptoms.

In "The Moon From the Right Side," the second story we have chosen as an ilustration, we are given a much more elaborate and devastating portrait of the Jew. This tale is related by a young Russian girl, a member of a Comsomol circle. The girl herself is of peasant origin, her father was a notorious "kulak." She, however, has been carried away by the revolution. So revolutionary, indeed, has she become, so free, so morally emancipated, that within a few years she has managed to have liaisons with twenty-two different men. It may amaze the reader to learn to what a high level of culture this daughter of a village "kulak" has risen under the influence of the city. She always reads the decadent, mystical poetry of Alexander Blok, uses delicate perfumes and powders, smokes narcotics, drinks like a trooper, and arranges at her room all kinds of Bacchanalian parties, euphemistically called "Athenian Nights."

It is at one of these Athenian Nights that we are first introduced to the young Jewish Communist, Isaika Chuzhachok. The name is significant. *Chuzhachok* is a diminutive derived from the word *chuzhoi* — which means stranger, alien. Thus Isaika Chuzhachok means Isaika the Little Stranger, the Little Alien.

Having bestowed upon him such a tell-tale name, the author proceeds to a minute description of Isaika's exterior: "Isaika Chuzhachok was of slight stature, his face and body were shrivelled, his pinched face looked like a canoe, and had only three points of interest—a big red nose, yellow, protruding, rapacious teeth, and two bead-like coffee-colored eyes which, in contrast to the extraordinary mobility of Isaika's body, seemed perfectly immobile and dead. Isaika Chuzhachok was dressed not only expensively, but with taste. He wore a little grey suit, checkered; a white blue-striped shirt stuck into his trousers and fastened by a wide yellow leather belt; un-

der his sharp, hook-like chin there was an enormous bright-blue bow-tie, the knot sticking out far into space, and the wings reaching out to the feeble shoulders of Isaika Chuzhachok; the mop of hair on Chuzhachok's head was not bad, either—it was so devilishly combed to the right, that one could not but tremble for the head of Isaika Chuzhachok—it seemed that in a minute or two the weight of the mop would pull the head to one side and break the long, thin, straw-like neck; his feet, too, were extraordinarily rigged up—sharp-nosed kid shoes, and grey socks with large white checkers. On beholding and examining Isaika Chuzhachok, one would find it exceedingly hard to enumerate all the colors on this remarkable figure."

In the course of his narrative, the author has to summon a veritable menagerie to supply him with the appropriate images: the "chicken," the "hare," the "grasshopper," the "emaciated goat," etc. Isaika always jerks his leg, sticks his tongue out through the little hole of a mouth, spits all over himself, and, to cap it all, is sexually impotent. In short, Isaika is a real "he-man."

Psychologically, too, Isaika is a very bizarre personality—obscene, inane, absurd, impudent, a wind-bag, a mess of banalities, catch-words, and undigested Communist phrases. Despite his impotence, he keeps on rattling, with an air of profundity, current platitudes about the "sex question and free love." He prides himself on being a little Trotsky. "It is absolutely impossible to follow the logic of his thoughts, since he is a combination of all feelings, all ideas, all temperaments of what he is in all seriousness pleased to call 'an international nature.'" In truth, Isaika is a little Trotsky, "international," "European." This little Jew's "internationalism" deceives no one, and his Comsomol comrades always jest about the

possibility of his side-locks beginning to sprout again, or about his Jewish "accent," which he has "almost" lost.

Throughout the story, one feels that the author regards the Jew as the morbid, disintegrating, degenerating element in the circle. He has no substance; he is neither fish nor meat; he is neither Jew nor Russian—he is really nothing, a mere "international" wind-bag. The new "nationalist" slant in the Russian's ideology is tellingly revealed in the portrayal of the Russian peasant-worker, Peter. He is tall, and strong, and silent. He is not given to Communist commonplaces. He acts, he builds, he constructs a new life. He is substantial. There is the breath of the soil and the meadows about him. He does not spout "free-love," he disdains the advances of the girls, he is loyal to his first love, to her who has lived with twenty-two men. It is the city—the metropolis, the home of the drifters—the Isaikas, the "internationalists," that is responsible for the girl's fall. Peter saves the girl by taking her back to the village, to the peasant committees, to the soil, to real life.

A new orientation. According to these authors, the city, the dictatorship of the city proletariat, is a mirage and a delusion. The city and everything associated with it is a fungus growth on the healthy body of rural, peasant Russia. Isaika is the symbol of this parasitic growth. Those anemic city products, those "rattlers" and "pen-pushers," those repulsive Isaikas and Hirshbergs, are Chuzhachoks, strangers, aliens, Jews. They must be swept aside in order to create a strong, mighty, prosperous, nationalistic Russia. This economic trend, this eternally recurring strife between the city and the village, has been reflected in the recent political struggle within the Communist ranks, as well as in the imaginative literature emanating of late from Soviet Russia. No wonder; a return to bourgeois economic forms crystallizes

in a reversion to a middle-class ideology, and, severe censorship notwithstanding, to old literary attitudes. Unofficially, unconsciously, temporarily, it seems, Russia has been constrained to turn her face to the petty proprietor, the peasant, and this about face is shown in the Russian author's recent sentiment toward the Jew, and the distorted, one-sided images he is creating. In such matters literature is a more sensitive barometer than official pronouncements.[11] And literature shows that the eternal, perplexing Jewish problem is looming up in Russia once more.

NOTES

PART I

1. Compare Turgenev's, Aksakov's, Gregorovich's treatment of the peasant in the middle of the Nineteenth century with Chekhov's, Bunin's, and Gorky's treatment of the same subject in the Twentieth century. With regard to the American Negro, it is illuminating to compare Harriet Beecher Stowe with Carl Van Vecten. (Preface.)

2. The historical material of this chapter is drawn chiefly from Volume I of Yulii Gessen's very scholarly *History of the Jewish People in Russia* (in Russian) and from S. M. Dubnow's *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, translated from the Russian by I. Friedlander.

3. Yulii Gessen in *History of the Jewish People in Russia*, Vol. I, p. 106.

4. Clarence A. Manning, "The Russian Sects," in *Anglican Theological Review*, Vol. IV, No. 4, March, 1922, p. 302. The extent to which this heresy spread may be gauged from the following quotation from the same source: "Some of these leaders, with the approval or toleration of the Grand Prince Ivan III, selected as Metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia in 1493, Zosima, a sympathizer with Judaism and possibly a disbeliever in Christ."

5. P. Milyukov, "The Russian Question in Russia," in *The Shield*, translated from the Russian by A. Yarmolinsky, p. 58.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

8. Note by the Governor of Lithuania, Frizel, quoted by Gessen. Also see *Voskhod* for 1895, Book III.

9. *The Archives of Historical and Practical Information*, 1862, Book IV, pp. 60-84 .

10. Quoted by Gessen, p. 75.

11. S. F. Platonov, *A History of Russia*, translated from the Russian by E. Aransberg, p. 337.

12. S. M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, Vol. II, p. 27.

13. M. Pines, *History of Yiddish Literature* (in Russian), p. 45.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

15. Isaak Ber Levinson ,1788-1860), who, in a series of fifteen learned volumes, tried to persuade the Jew to abandon petty trade and national aloofness. Agriculture, crafts, the study of foreign literatures and cultures, were the ideals he held before his people. M. A. Ginzburg (1795-1846) popularized wordly knowledge in the Hebrew language. He wrote a *General History*, translated stories, published a *Short History of Russia*, a monograph on the war of 1812, etc. There were also the Lebensons, father and son. The father, A. B. Lebenson (1794-1878), was a romantic poet in whose verse lyricism and philosophy abounded, and in whose allegorical drama *Emeth weemunah* (Truth and Faith) the hypocrisy of the "Good Man" and the credulousness of the mass were bitterly satirized. The son, M. Lebenson (1828-1852), was one of the most gifted writers of the period. He died of tuberculosis at the age of 24. But in this short time he managed to translate the third and fourth books of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and to publish two volumes of poetry, *Schirei Bath Zion* (Songs of Zion) *Kinnor Bath Zion* (The Harp of Zion). The first contained six long poems dealing with Biblical themes. The second was a sheaf of shorter poems—translations and original. Here we have Horace, Virgil, Schiller, Goethe, Mickiewicz, and others. His erotic poems are sparkling, playful, at times deeply plaintive, always fiery and passionate. There was also the Hebrew Walter Scott, author of romantic historical novels, Abraham Mapu (1808-1867), who in his beautiful re-creations of the happy, remote past awakened in the Ghetto a yearning for freedom, for joy, and for civic achievement.

16. For the history and development of Yiddish literature, I refer the reader to Leo Wiener's study, *The History of Yiddish Literature in the Nineteenth Century*, published in 1899 by Scribner; also to M. Pines's study of the same subject, up to and including the first decade of the twentieth century, which is obtainable in French, German, Russian, and Yiddish. For a shorter, though very illuminating study of the subject, the reader should turn to I. S. Eliashev's "Yiddish Literature since the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century" in *Otechestvo*, Vol. I. pp. 312-332, published in Petrograd, in 1916.

17. An excellent study of the Jewish writers in Russian literature has been made by Lvov-Rogachesvsky in his *Russian-Jewish Literature.* A perusal of this book will reveal my indebtedness to its author in certain aspects of my work.

18. Quoted by Rogachevsky on p. 64 of the above-mentioned book.

19. Leo Wiener, *Anthology of Russian Literature*, Vol. I, p. 96.

20. In the beginning of the Nineteenth century we still come across such titles as *Herod and Mariamond*, tragedy in five acts by Derzhavin (1809); *Deborah, or the Triumph of Faith*, by Prince A. Shakovsky (1811); *The Maccabeans*, by P. Korsakov (1815), etc.

21. See Vengerov's note in Vol. II, p. 554, of Pushkin's Collected Works, edited by I. C. Vengerov.

22. Quoted in *Yevreiskaia Lietopis*, 1923, Vol. I, p. 63.

23. M. J. Landa, *The Jew in Drama*, p. 202.

24. From Lermontov's beautiful lyric poem "Clouds."

25. From Lermontov's charming lyric poem "The Sail."

26. The Jew in Turgenev's *The End of Chertopkhanov* is saved by the generous Christian from the hands of the angry peasants, as Yankel is saved from the Cossacks by the big-hearted Taras. In both cases the Jew displays excessive mobility, and a ridiculous anxiety to cling to life. We shall see further traces of Yankel in Dostoievsky and other writers.

27. S. M. Dudnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland.*

28. This similarity becomes even more striking when we realize that Isaac of York's supplying Ivanhoe with a horse is duplicated by the Jew's giving his horse to Chertopkhanov.

PART II

1. Karl Kautsky *Are the Jews a Race?* (translated from the German), pp. 148, 149.

2. Works, Vol. I, p. 735.

3. Prince G. A. Potiomkin (1739-1791), the lover of Katherine II, a powerful and very influential nobleman during her reign.

4. Jewish financier and railroad builder (1837-1888). In 1882 he contributed 200,000 rubles to the University of St. Petersburg. There is a veiled reference to Poliakov in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina.* Stiva Oblonsky, one of the characters in the novel, turns for money to one Bulgarinov, a financier and president of a railroad company. Bulgarinov (Bulgarin-ov; *Bulgarin* mean-

ing Bulgarian) is obviously Poliakov (Poliak-ov; *Poliak* meaning Pole) thinly disguised. (See *Yevreiskaia Lietopsis*, Vol. I, p. 78, 1923.)

5. Nihilist. Main character in Turgenev's *Fathers and Children.*

6. *Otechestvo*, 1916, Vol. I, p. 344.

7. O. Rabinovich, Vol. III, p. 123.

8. O. Rabinovich (1817-1869), G. I. Bogrov (1825-1885), L. O. Levando (1835-1888), V. N. Nikitin (1839-?), etc.

9. Yevreiskaia Biblioteka, Vol. I, p. 55.

10. A river mentioned in the Talmud. According to the legend this river would throw up stones during every day of the week, but would rest on the Sabbath.

11. In his story "Fishke."

12. Bernard Lazare, *Anti-Semitism*, pp. 331-332.

13. In France the Pereire family, Portugese Jews, were also very conspicuous. They were the builders of the first French railway, as well as the leading bankers and financiers of the Second Empire.

14. Karl Marx, *Selected Essays*, p. 92, International Publishers.

15. *Yevreiskaia Lietopis*, Vol. I, p. 78.

16. Lvov-Rogachevsky, *Russian-Jewish Literature*, p. 15.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

18. S. F. Platonov, *History of Russia*, p. 394.

19. "Status in Statu. Forty Centuries of Being," in *The Author's Diary* for the years 1877 and 1880-1881.

20. Polish writer; treated the Jews very sympathetically.

PART III

1. The editor of the semiofficial daily *Novoe Vremia.* In 1880 he also published an article under the title "The Jew is Coming," in which he maintained that the Jews were the leaders of the revolutionary movement, that though the Jews constitute three per cent of the entire population, they make up seven per cent of all the political cases before the Courts. He claimed that the Jews were incendiaries on two fronts—Capitalism and Socialism. In this he reminds us of Pisemsky's treatment of the Galkins, father and son. He also maintained that in 1876 the Jews made up 9.9 per cent of the total number of students in Russian secondary schools, while in 1877—10.7 per cent. He thus

prognosticated that in about a decade or so the Jews would dominate not only the practical, but all the liberal professions. (See Lvov-Rogachevsky *Russko-Evreiskaia Lit.* Chapter VII),

2. Semen Yakovlevich Nadson's (1862-2886) grandfather adopted Christianity and also converted his son, the poet's father. The poem quoted was written in 1885.

3. Herman Bandanas in *Notes of an Apostate;* G. Yaroshevsky in *Emigrants From Mezhepol;* N. M. Minsky in *The Siege of Tulchin;* I. Abramovich in *Verse* (1889).

4. M. M. Dolitzky (1856-), K. A. Shapiro (1841-1900)—in poetry. David Frishman (1863-1922)—in journalism and criticism. Moreover, many daily and monthly organs appear. In the nineties A. I. Ginzburg (Akhad Ha'am; 1856-1927), the noted spiritual Zionist, makes his debut.

5. J. L. Peretz.

6. S. Chernikhovsky.

7. Z. Shneur. While the famous poet Bialik writes in all genres.

8. J. L. Peretz, Sholom Aleikhem (S. Rabinowitz), David Pinski, Avraham Reisin, Sholom Ash, and numerous others, many of whom have come to the United States where they still enrich Jewish letters.

9. Dymov, Tan, Shestov, Veinberg, Volynsky, Martov, Gornfeld, Deutch, Axelrod, Gershuni, Gots and many others.

10. Minsky, Frug, An-nsky (Rappoport), Aisman, Yushkevitch, Rivkin, Ossipovich, Jaffe, Ben-Ami, Sobol, Pruzhanski, Naumov-Kogan, etc.

11. My attention was called to these two chapters after the above analysis of Tolstoy had been written. This additional evidence serves only to corroborate my diagnosis.

PART IV

1. An excellent picture of all these changes in Jewish life is to be found in a series of studies made in 1924 by five Jewish students of the Leningrad Geographical Institute and the Leningrad Institute of Jewish Learning. These studies, edited by Prof. Tan-Bogoraz, are published collectively under the title, *Yevreiskoe Mesteshko v Revolutsii* (The Jewish Town During the Revolution), State Publishing House, 1926. Well documented studies of the pogrom in the Ukraine can be found in I. Chernikov's "Anti-Semitism and Pogroms in the Ukraine," *Ostjudeshes Historisches Archiv,* 1923; in Eless Heifetz's *The Slaughter*

of the Jews of Eastern Europe, Chapters VIII, IX, X; and in the *Report on Jewish Pogroms* by the Kieff Pogrom Relief Committee, controlled by the Russian Red Cross, published by Thomas Seltzer, 1926. A rapid survey of the changes in the communal life of the Jews is given by H. S. Linfield (Director of the Department of Information and Statistics of the Bureau of Jewish Social Research) in his *The Communal Organization of the Jews in Soviet Russia* (1925).

From all these detailed and first-hand studies and reports the following picture may be reconstructed:

The furious waves of revolution and counter-revolution had dashed across the Jewish towns and villages, leaving nothing but ruin behind them. Within the Soviet domain the Jews paid with property; in contested territory, in the Ukraine for instance, they paid with lives as well. During the German occupation of the Ukraine, during the period of the hetmans, from 1917 to 1918 included, a whole series of Jewish pogroms had taken place. As usual the Jew was blamed for all the misfortunes that had visited that distracted country. On the one hand, the Jew was slain as a Bolshevik, on the other, as one who betrayed Russia to the Germans. Then came two most terrible years, 1919 and 1920, the time of ceaseless civil war, of fire and sword, of the Petluras and the Denikins, of banditry and partisan warfare, of Polish invasions, of destructive movements of the Red Army, and, of course, of pogroms. The result—1,520 recorded pogroms, 200,000 killed, 300,000 homeless orphans, over a million refugees, one-third of Jewish property (amounting to hundreds of millions of rubles) completely and irretrievably destroyed—a monstrous price for three years of civil war and revolution In comparison with this, all the pogroms since 1668 were mere child's play, mere makeshifts.

Where the Bolsheviks were in power, they tried, of course, to repress and uproot all anti-Semitic manifestations. And yet, contrary to the general belief, the Jews under the Soviets got on far from satisfactorily. The period of military communism was almost as destructive of Jewish well-being as had been the pogroms in the Ukraine. Having lost their property, the Jewish middle class, i. e., the majority of Jews, found it extremely difficult to adjust themselves to the new conditions of life. Harassed by perpetual requisitions, searches, and Committees of the Poor, the Jewish shopkeeper and trader chafed under the new regime. The Jewish bourgeoisie resisted, its resistance at times culminating in acts of terrorism and political murder. More often, however, this resistance expressed itself in intensive smuggling. Smugglers, when caught, were ruthlessly prosecuted. Not infrequently the penalty was death. Still, petty trading did go on—in the darkness of the night, illegally, feebly, it persisted. During the day the town would sleep, at night it would stir into activity. Even petty craftsmen, tailors, shoemakers, tinners, etc., adopted a nocturnal mode of life, and had

their work rooms open during the dark hours. Prices were sky high. To compensate themselves for all possible requisitions, the petty trader and craftsman extorted from their customers as much as they possibly could. This illegal trading lasted up to the period when the Government instituted the New Economic Policy, the NEP, and even for some time after.

At the outset the petty trader in the small Jewish town seemed to begin to recover under the NEP, but this did not last long. The decline in the buying capacity of the population, the growth of cooperative enterprise, the severe laws against all sorts of speculations and business, and, above all, the general economic debility of the unstable Jewish middle class, tended to reduce to naught the potential advantages of the NEP. Moreover, political disfranchisement, social ostracism, and crushing taxes on all private enterprise, tended further to discourage all private initiative. Here is a characteristic remark of a Jewish provincial "nepman," quoted by Professor V. G. Tan-Bogoraz:

"You know what? Provide me with a job that would net me ten rubles a month, and, I assure you I'll become a most excellent Bolshevik. I'll serve honestly, and will be devoted, body and soul, to Bolshevism. Send me anywhere, to any place you wish. I will jump into fire or water, as long as I am assured of a living for the next day."

Obviously, the position of the Jewish middle class has not been an enviable one. This class has been composed mainly of old or middle-aged Jews, true products of the past, men who never knew a trade or physical work, men who lived on vapor, "luftmenshen," petty traders, petty speculators who grew in the sickly atmosphere of the old Ghetto. They have been too old to adapt themselves to a new proletarian regime. Morbid vestiges of a dying past, their tragedy has been great and irremediable.

On a slightly higher economic level has been the Jewish craftsman. He has been meeting the needs of the peasant in the villages, and has been able to eke out a more or less precarious living. It is noteworthy that very few young men are engaged in crafts. The average age is between thirty and forty. The reason for this is rather peculiar. The Jewish master craftsman is so harassed by the numerous labor laws intended to protect the interests of the employee, the apprentice or the skilled worker, that he prefers not to employ any help. As a result very few young Jews have a chance to learn a trade.

Somewhat higher in the economic scale are the factory workers. They earn about seventy rubles a month, and are the spoiled children of the State. But even their well-being is relative, a result of the general lowering of standards. Furthermore, these factory workers constitute an infinitesimal minority of the Jewish population. There are few factories in Russia altogether; in the small Jewish towns they are practically non-existent.

Jewish youths in the small towns are in a particularly bad plight. Business does not attract them—first, because one cannot make a living at it; secondly, because the current ideology discourages it. They dream of work, but work is not to be had.

There is great unemployment in Soviet Russia, while from the crafts they are kept out by the paradoxical situation of the laws being too solicitous of their welfare.

2) "The situation of the Jews in Russia is tragic...were it not for the help that comes from friends and relatives in America, many would die from starvation...their present economic condition is due altogether to the prevailing political and economic philosophy of the Soviet Government. (*New Exodus*, p. 29.)

3) There are 3,380,000 Jews in the U. S. S. R.

H. S. Linfield, *Communal Organization of Jews in Soviet Russia*, p 13. In the trade unions there are about 300,000 Jews, 120,000 of them workers, *Yevreiskaia Proletarskaia Mysl*, the official organ of the Poalay Zion, No. 40-42, p. 38. The extent to which the Jewish masses have benefited by the revolution may be judged from H. S. Linfield's statement: "3,380,000 Jews have been delivered into the hands of some forty thousand or fifty thousand of Jews, mostly youths, whose claim to control rests on the fact that they are of the same political belief as the ruling class of the majority (Russian) group."

4. A very readable and splendidly illustrated article by Maurice Hindus on "The Jew in Revolutionary Russia," has been published in *Asia*, December, 1927. My description of the Jewish "nepman" has been taken from that article.

5. We cannot dwell here on all the important Jewish-Russian writers who have appeared on the literary horizon during the last decade. Any book on contemporary Russian literature will supply the information to those who are interested. The best source obtainable in English is Prince D. S. Mirsky's *Contemporary Russian Literature* (Alfred Knopf, 1926). There is little that is distinctly Jewish about these authors. Scarcely anything of the contemporary Jewish scene is revealed in their writings. Their lives and personalities, however, are tokens of the overwhelming changes brought into Jewish life by war and revolution. To take Babel, for example—a true product of fire and sword; a soldier in Budeny's Cossack Regiment; a fantastic blend of heroism and beastliness, of blood and death and murder, of vulgarity and great faith; a powerful writer with no inhibitions, no fears; a veritable dare-devil; a mixture of humor and pathos and cruelty. Another example—Victor Shklovsky; first a student of philosophy in the University of Petrograd, then an engineer in the army (1916), then a member of the Petrograd Soviet under the Provisional Government (1917), then a Commis-

sar of that Government at the Galician front, where he was wounded, then a Commissar at the Persian front, then a conspirator against the Bolsheviki (he was a member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party), then an emigré in Europe (1922), then again in Russia, reconciled with the Bolshevik Government—but throughout this variegated career a great Russian critic and writer.

6. The Jew as a factor in the Russian Revolution is very interestingly discussed in Chapter I of A. D. Margolin's book, *The Jews of Eastern Europe.* The author cites facts and names and figures whereby he proves that the Jew's participation in the Bolshevik Revolution has been grossly exaggerated by the anti-Semites. He proves, for instance, that most of the contributors to the anti-Bolshevik press outside of Russia are Russian Jews.

7. Take as an example Shulgin's brilliantly written *Three Capitals,* or M. Kozyrev's *The Futurists* (1923); or N. N. Bielosvietov's *The Commune of Proletarian Missionaries.*

8. Here are a few illustrations taken from a collection published in the dignified periodical *Volia Rossii,* Prague, 1925:

Tell me, please, are there many Jews in the Communist Party?
No, about sixty per cent.
And the rest?
Jewesses.

Why does the *chervoniets* (the new Russian money) bear inscriptions in all languages, in Armenian, Georgian, Ukrainian, etc., except in Yiddish? The author's modesty.

Christmas Eve in Moscow. The family of a Jewish "nepman" is at the supper table. The peals of the many bells of the Moscow churches are heard.
Tell me, Nathan, why all this ringing of bells?
Akh, it is the Russian Colony here celebrating one of their holidays.

9. "The mere fact that besides the Jewish middleman there was also a Jewish representative of the State force, called forth a feeling of hostility on the part of the Ukrainian peasant. The Jew, whom he was accustomed to look down upon and to treat with contempt, suddenly stood before him as the possessor of power demanding respect. In addition, this same Jew appeared as the representative of a Government foreign to the village and the object of its hatred. As a result the peasant became suspicious of the entire Jewish population, regarding all the Jews without exception as members of the Soviet regime, which en-

abled them to exercise power against the Christian population." *Report on Jewish Pogroms by the Kieff Pogrom Relief Committee.*

10. "There are no discriminations against the Jews in Soviet Russia," says Linfield in his above mentioned Report.

11. Despite his economic ruin, despite the growing anti-Jewish feeling, the Jew in Russia has no reason to despair. After all, the Jew has become a full-fledged Russian citizen. He may come and go whenever and wherever he pleases. He may enter any school, or trade, or profession open to any other Russian citizen. He enjoys all the rights and suffers all the restrictions enjoyed and suffered by all the citizens of the U. S. S. R. We hear of local Soviets and courts in Jewish districts being conducted in Yiddish. Three Russian Universities have Yiddish departments. One of the largest Jewish publishing houses in the world is now to be found in Russia. The schools are secular. The old kheders and Yeshivas are abolished, religious instruction in schools has been prohibited. An optimistic description of the Yiddish schools is given by Maurice Hindus in "The Jew in Revolutionary Russia" (*Asia*, December, 1917). H. L. Linfield, though praising the schools, thinks that unless measures are taken, these schools cannot prevent the assimilation of the Jew in Russia. His figures are suggestive. Out of 500,000 Jewish children only 55,000 registered in Yiddish schools. The majority of Jews prefer to study in Russian institutions.

Another ray of light is the movement of the Jews to the soil. With the help of the Soviet Government and of various private organizations, such as the American Agro-Joint, and the Jewish organizations in Russia—the OZET, the ORT, the ICA—thirty-five thousand Jews have settled on the land. "Those who have visited the colonies two or three times during these three years, and have seen with their own eyes how the new colonies sprang up in the wild prairies, with thousands of families actually starting a new life, striking roots in the soil and turning the wilderness into promising farming communities, cannot help expressing their admiration and calling the whole thing a miracle," Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, director of the Agro-Joint, in an article "What Has the Agro-Joint Accomplished?" (*The Jewish Tribune*, September 23, 1927). Similar reports have come from various sources: Linfield's Report; David A. Brown's Report to the A. J. J. D. C., on May 29, 1925; the collected studies made by the five Leningrad students in the volume *The Jewish Town During the Revolution* (See pages 3, 4, and 5, etc.).

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